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FIVE OLD PLAYS,

FORMING

A SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

COLLECTIONS OF DODSLEY AND OTHERS.

EDITED BY

J. PAYNE COLLIER, Esq. F.S.A.



LONDON:

WILLIAM PICKERING.

1833.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Five Plays contained in this volume, are for the first time reprinted from very scarce or unique originals, and are designed to form a supplement to Dodsley's well known collection. Whatever value that collection possesses may be claimed for this addition to it, because the intrinsic merit of the plays is equal to if not greater than that of any hitherto republished. An account of the writer is prefixed to each play, and this effort to encrease the stores of our much neglected stage, will, it is hoped, be deemed acceptable to the Dramatic Antiquary, and to all who are interested in our early literature.

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11

THE DOWNFALL

OF

ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington and *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington** were both formerly ascribed to Thomas Heywood on the always disputable authority of Kirkman the Bookseller. The discovery of the folio account-book of Philip Henslowe, proprietor of the Rose theatre on the Bank-side, enabled Malone to correct the error.† The following entries in Henslowe's MSS. contain the evidence upon the subject.

“ Feb. 1597-8—The first part of Robin Hood by Anthony Mundy.

“The second part of the Downfall of Earl Huntington, sirnamed Robinhood by Anthony Mundy and Henry Chettle.”

It is to be observed that what Henslowe mentions as “the second part of the downfall of Earl Huntington” is in fact the play called on the printed title-page *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*. Hence we find that Anthony Munday wrote the *first part* or “Downfall” alone, and the *second part* or “Death” in conjunction with Henry Chettle: nevertheless there is a memorandum by Henslowe by which it seems that Chettle had something to do also with the *first part*. It is in these terms.

“Lent unto Robarte Shawe the 18 of Novemb. 1598, to lend unto Mr. Cheattle upon the mending of The First Part of Robart Hoode, the sum of xs.”

The loan here mentioned was perhaps in anticipation

* Malone originally supposed the plays to be by Heywood, and so treated them. In the last edit. of Shakespeare by Boswell (iii. 99) the mistake is allowed to remain, and in a note also *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon* is quoted as Heywood's production.

† Ritson in his *Robin Hood*, l. li. et seq: gives some quotations from them, as by Munday and Chettle.

of "the mending;" and Malone subsequently met with the following notice: "For mending of Robin Hood for the Corte;" which might be written after the improvements, considered necessary before the performance of the play at Court, had been completed.

Anthony Munday must have been born in 1553, for the monument to him in the Church of St. Stephen, Coleman street, states, that at the time of his death, 10th. August, 1633, he was 80 years old. From the inscription we likewise learn that he was "a citizen and draper." In 1589 he lived in the city, and dates his translation of *The History of Palmendos* "from my house in Cripplegate:" that he carried on the business of a draper, or had some connection with the trade as late as 1613, may be gathered from the following passage at the close of *The Triumphs of Truth*, the city Pageant for that year, by Thomas Middleton. "The fire-work being made by Maister Humphrey Nichols, a man excellent in his art; and the whole work and body of the Triumph with all the proper beauties of the workmanship, most artfully and faithfully performed by John Grinkin; and those furnished with apparel and porters by Anthony Monday, Gentleman." The stile of "gentleman" was probably given to him with reference to the productions of his pen.

At what date he acquired the title of "poet to the city" does not appear: he wrote the Lord Mayor's Pageant in 1605, but he had certainly earlier been similarly employed, as Ben Jonson introduces him in that capacity in *The Case is Altered*, which was written in the end of 1598, or beginning of 1599.* He there throws some ridicule upon Don Antonio

* Mr. Gifford fell into an error (Ben Jonson, vi. 320.) in stating that *The Case is Altered* "should have stood at the head of Jonson's works, had chronology only been consulted." In the Life of Ben Jonson, he refers to Henslowe's papers to prove that *Every Man in his Humour* was written in 1596, and in *The Case is Altered*, Ben Jonson expressly quotes Meres' *Palladis Tamia*, which was not published until 1598. Nash's *Lenten Stuff*, affords evidence that "the witty play of *The Case is Altered*" was popular in 1599.

Balladino (as he calls Munday) and Mr. Gifford was of opinion that Middleton meant to censure him in his *Triumphs of Truth*, as the "impudent common writer" of city pageants; but this is hardly consistent with the mention Middleton introduces of Munday at the close of that performance. Besides, Dekker wrote the pageant for the year 1612, immediately preceding that for which Middleton was engaged; and that Munday was not in disrepute is obvious from the fact that in 1614, 1615 and 1616, his pen was again in request for the same purpose.

Whatever might have been Munday's previous life, in the year 1582 he was placed in no very enviable situation. He had been mainly instrumental in detecting the Popish Conspiracy in that year, which drew down upon him the bitter animosity of the Jesuits. They charged him in their publications (from which extracts may be seen in Mr. A. Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary, and elsewhere) with having been "first a stage player and afterwards an apprentice," and after being "hissed from the stage" and residing at Rome, with having returned to his original occupation. Munday himself admits, in the account he published of Edmund Campion and his confederates, that he was "some time the Pope's scholar in the Seminary of Rome," but always stoutly denied that he was a Roman Catholic.—Perhaps the most curious tract upon this subject is in the hands of Mr. Rodd of Great Newport street: it is entitled "A breefe and true reporte of the Execution of certaine Traytours at Tiborne the xxviii, and xxx dayes of May 1582. Gathered by A. M. who was there present." He signs the Dedication at length "A. Munday," and mentions that he had been a witness against some of the offenders. The persons he saw executed were, Thomas Foord, John Shert, Robert Johnson, William Filbie, Luke Kirbie, Lawrance Richardson, and Thomas Cottom; and he seems to have been publicly employed to confute them at the foot of the gallows, and to convince the populace that they were

traitors and Papists, denying the supremacy of Queen Elizabeth. He there had a long dispute with Kirbie upon matters of fact, and, according to his own shewing, was guilty, while abroad, at least of a little duplicity.— He notices having seen Captain Stukely at Rome, who was killed at the battle of Alcazar in 1578. In the conclusion he promises his *English Romaine Lyfe* “so soon as it can be printed” in which he purposes to disclose the “Romish and Sathanical juglings” of the Jesuits.

Munday was a very voluminous author in verse and prose, original and translated, and is certainly to be reckoned among the predecessors of Shakespeare in dramatic composition. His earliest work, as far as can be now ascertained, was “*The Mirror of Mutability*,” 1579, when he was in his 26th year: he dedicates it to the Earl of Oxford, and perhaps then belonged to the company of players of that nobleman, to which he had again attached himself on his return from Italy.* The Council Registers shew that this nobleman had a company of players under his protection in 1575. Munday’s “*Banquet of Daintie Conceits*” was printed in 1588, and we particularise it, because it was unknown to Ames, Herbert, and Ritson. Catalogues and specimens of his other undramatic works may be found in *Bibliographia Poetica*, *Censura Literaria*, *British Bibliographer*,† &c. The earliest praise of Munday is contained in Webbe’s *Discourse of English Poetrie*, 1586, where his “*Sweete sobs of Sheeheardes and Nymphes*” is especially pointed out as “very rare poetrie.” Francis Meres in 1598

* On the title-page of his translation of *Palmerin of England*, the third part of which bears date in 1602, he is called “one of the Messengers of her Majesty’s Chamber;” but how, and at what date he obtained this “small court appointment” we are without information. Perhaps it was given to him as a reward for his services in 1582.

† Munday did not always publish under his own name, and according to Ritson, whose authority has been often quoted on this point, translated “*The Orator*, written in French by Alexander Silvayn,” under the name of Lazarus Piot, from the dedication to which it may be inferred that he had been in the army. “A ballad made by Ant. Munday, of the encouragement of an English soldier to his fellow mates,” was licenced to John Charlewood, in 1579.

(*Palladis Tamia*, fo. 283, b.) enumerating many of the best dramatic poets of his day, including Shakespeare, Heywood, Chapman, Porter, Lodge, &c. gives Anthony Munday the praise of being "our best plotter," a distinction that excited the spleen of Ben Jonson in his *Case is Altered*, particularly as he was omitted.

Nearly all the existing information respecting Anthony Munday's dramatic works is derived from Henslowe's papers. At what period he began to write for the stage cannot be ascertained: the earliest date in these MSS. connected with his name is December, 1597, but as he was perhaps a member of the Earl of Oxford's theatrical company before he went abroad, and as he was certainly at Rome prior to 1578, it is likely that he was very early the author of theatrical performances. In the old catalogues, and in Langbaine's *Momus Triumphans*, 1688, a piece called *Fidele and Fortunatus* is mentioned, and such a play was entered at Stationers' Hall, Nov. 12, 1584. There is little doubt that this is the same production, two copies of which have been discovered within the last few years, with the running title of *Two Italian Gentlemen*, that being the second title to *Fidele and Fortunatus* in the Register. Both copies are without title-pages; but to one of them, is prefixed a dedication signed A. M. and we may with tolerable certainty conclude that Anthony Munday was the author or translator of it, and that it was printed about the date of its entry on the Stationers' Books. / It is pretty evident that the play now reprinted from the only known edition in 1601, was written considerably before 1597-8, the year when it is first noticed in the accounts of the proprietor of the Rose. The story is treated with a simplicity bordering upon rudeness, and historical facts are perverted just as suited the purpose of the writer. Whether we consider it as contemporary with, or preceding the productions of the same class by Shakespeare, it is a relic of high interest, and nearly all the sylvan portions of the play, in which Robin Hood and his "merry men" are engaged, are of no ordinary beauty. Some of the serious scenes

are also extremely well written, and the blank-verse, interspersed with rhimes as was usual in our earlier dramas, by no means inharmonious.

The subsequent catalogue of plays which Munday wrote, either alone or in conjunction with others, is derived from the materials supplied by Malone.

1. *Mother Redcap*, by Anthony Munday and Michael Drayton. December 1597. Not printed.*

2. *The Downfal of Robert Earl of Huntington*, by Anthony Munday, February 1597-8. Printed in 1601.

3. *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, by Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle, February 1597-8. Printed in 1601.

4. *The Funeral of Richard Cordelion*, by Robert Wilson, Henry Chettle, Anthony Munday and Michael Drayton, May 1598. Not printed.

5. *Valentine and Orson*, by Richard Hathwaye and Anthony Munday, July 1598. Not printed.

6. *Chance Medley*, by Robert Wilson, Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Dekker, August 1598. Not printed.

7. *Owen Tudor*, by Michael Drayton, Richard Hathwaye, Anthony Munday, and Robert Wilson, January 1599-1600. Not printed,

8. *Fair Constance of Rome*, by Anthony Munday, Richard Hathwaye, Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker, June 1600. Not printed.

9. *Fair Constance of Rome*, Part II. by the same authors, June 1600. Not printed.

10. *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey*,† by Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, and Wentworth Smith, November 12, 1601. Not printed.

11. *Two Harpies*, by Thomas Dekker, Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton, John Webster, and Anthony Munday, May 1602. Not printed.

12. *The Widow's Charm*, by Anthony Munday,

* That is, no printed copy has yet been discovered, although it may have passed through the press.

† In Henslowe's MSS. this play is also called "The First part of Cardinal Wolsey."

July 1602. Printed in 1607, as Malone conjectured, under the Title of “The Puritan or Widow of Watling Street,” and ascribed to Shakespeare.

13. The Set at Tennis, by Anthony Munday, December 1602. Not printed.*

14. The first part of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle, by Anthony Munday, Michael Drayton, Robert Wilson and Richard Hathwaye.

Of the last, two editions were published in 1600, the one with, and the other without the name of Shakespeare on the title-page, but Mr. Malone discovered from the Registers of the Stationers’ Company that he was not concerned in it. Whether Munday wrote any plays subsequent to the date to which Henslowe’s papers extend is not known.

Such particulars as have come down to us regarding Henry Chettle will be prefixed to *The Death of the Earl of Huntington*, the second part of the play now reprinted.

* In 1620 was printed “The World toss’d at Tennis, by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley.” Perhaps it is the same play, and that Munday had a share in the authorship of it.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

SKELTON.

SIR JOHN ELTHAM,

KING RICHARD THE FIRST.

PRINCE JOHN.

ROBERT, *Earl of Huntington.*

LITTLE JOHN.

SCARLET.

SCATHLOCK.

FRIAR TUCK.

MUCH, *the Clown.*

LEICESTER.

RICHMOND.

SALISBURY.

CHESTER.

SENTLOE.

FITZWATER.

LACY.

SIR HUGH LACY.

SIR GILBERT BROUGHTON.

BISHOP OF ELY.

PRIOR OF YORK.

JUSTICE WARMAN.

WARMAN'S COUSIN.

RALPH.

*Jailer of Nottingham, Sheriff, Messenger, Boy,
Colliers, &c.*

QUEEN ELINOR.

MATILDA, *Fitzwater's Daughter.*

WARMAN'S WIFE.

OLD WOMAN.

* There is no list of Characters prefixed to the old copy.

THE DOWNFALL

OF

ROBERT, EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter SIR JOHN ELTHAM, *and knock at Skelton's door.**

Sir John. How, master Skelton ; what, at study hard ?
[*Opens the door.*

Skelton. Welcome, and wished for, honest Sir John Eltham.

I have sent twice, and either time he miss'd
That went to seek you.

Eltham. So full well he might :
These two hours it pleased his majesty
To use my service in surveying maps,
Sent over from the good king Ferdinand,
That to the Indies, at Sebastian's suit,
Hath lately sent a Spanish colony.

Skelton. Then 'twill trouble you,
After your great affairs, to take the pain
That I intended to entreat you to,
About rehearsal of your promis'd play.

* This forms the Induction to the play, which purports to have been written to be performed before Henry VIII. by Sir Thomas Mantle, who performed Robin Hood, by Sir John Eltham, who played the part of Little John, by Skelton who acted Friar Tuck, by "Little Tracy," as he is called, who supported the character of Maid Marian, and others, whose names are not mentioned. The whole is only supposed to be a rehearsal prior to the representation of the piece before the king, and in the course of it Skelton and Sir John Eltham have various critical and explanatory interlocutions. Skelton, it will be observed, also undertakes the duty of interpreting the otherwise "inexplicable dumb shew." The old copy is not divided into acts and scenes.

Eltham. Nay, master Skelton ; for the king himself,
As we were parting, bid me take great heed,
We fail not of our day : therefore I pray
Send for the rest, that now we may rehearse.

Skelton. Oh they are ready all, and dress'd to play.
What part play you ?

Eltham. Why, I play Little John,
And came on purpose with this green suit.

Skelton. Holla, my masters ! Little John is come.

*[At every door all the players run out, some crying
" where ? where ? " others " welcome, Sir John : "
among others the boys and Clown.*

Skelton. Faith, little Tracy, you are somewhat forward :
What, our maid Marian, leaping like a lad ?
If you remember, Robin is your love,
Sir Thomas Mantle yonder ; not Sir John.

Clown. But master, Sir John is my fellow, for I am
Much, the miller's son, am I not ?

Skelton. I know ye are, sir :
And, gentlemen, since you are thus prepar'd,
Go in, and bring your dumb scene on the stage ;
And I, as prologue, purpose to express
The ground whereon our history is laid.

[Exeunt. Manent Skelton, and Sir John.

*Trumpets sound. Enter first KING RICHARD with drum
and ancient giving ELY a purse and sceptre ; his
mother, and brother JOHN, CHESTER, LEICESTER,
LACY, others at the king's appointment doing reverence.
The king goes in : presently ELY ascends the chair :
Chester, John, and the Queen part displeasantly.
Enter ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON, leading
MARIAN : follows him WARMAN, and after Warman
the PRIOR ; Warman ever flattering and making cur-
tesy, taking gifts of the Prior behind and his master
before. PRINCE JOHN enters, offereth to take Ma-
rian. QUEEN ELINOR enters, offering to pull Robin
from her ; but they enfold each other, and sit down
within the curtains. Warman with the Prior, Sir
Hugh Lacy, Lord Sentloe, and Sir Gilbert Broughton
fold hands, and drawing the curtains, all (but the*

*Prior) enter, and are kindly received by Robin Hood.
The curtains are again shut.*

Skelton. Sir John, once more, bid your dumb shews
come in,

That, as they pass, I may explain them all.

*Enter KING RICHARD with drum and ensign, giving
ELY a purse and sceptre; his mother, and brother JOHN,
CHESTER, LEICESTER, LACY, and others at the King's
appointment doing reverence. The King goes in.*

Richard, call'd Cœur de Lion, takes his leave,
Like the Lord's champion, 'gainst the pagan foes,
That spoil Judea, and rich Palestine.

The rule of England, and his princely seat,
He leaves with Ely, then lord chancellor;
To whom the mother Queen, her son, prince John,
Chester, and all the peers are sworn.

[Exit Richard cum militibus.

*ELY ascends the chair; CHESTER, JOHN, and the
QUEEN part displeasantly.*

Now reverend Ely, like the deputy
Of God's great deputy, ascends the throne;
Which the Queen Mother, and ambitious John,
Repining at, raised many mutinies:
And how they ended you anon shall hear.

[Exeunt omnes.

*Enter ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON, leading MA-
RIAN: follows him WARMAN, and after Warman,
the PRIOR; Warman ever flattering and making cur-
tesy, taking gifts of the Prior behind, and his master
before. PRINCE JOHN enters, offereth to take Marian.
QUEEN ELINOR enters, offering to pull Robin from
her; but they enfold each other, and sit down within
the curtains.*

This youth that leads yon virgin by the hand
(As doth the sun the morning richly clad)
Is our Earl Robert, or your Robin Hood,
That in those days, was Earl of Huntington.
The ill-fac'd miser, bribed in either hand,

Is Warman, once the steward of his house,
 Who, Judas-like, betrays his liberal lord,
 Into the hands of that relentless Prior,
 Called Gilbert Hood, uncle to Huntington.
 Those two, that seek to part these lovely friends,
 Are Elinor the Queen, and John the Prince :
 She loves Earl Robert, he Maid Marian ;
 But vainly, for their dear affect is such,
 As only death can sunder their true loves.
 Long had they lov'd, and now it is agreed,
 This day they must be troth-plight, after wed.
 At Huntington's fair house a feast is held ;
 But envy turns it to a house of tears :
 For those false guests, conspiring with the Prior,
 To whom Earl Robert greatly is in debt,
 Mean at the banquet to betray the Earl,
 Unto a heavy writ of outlawry.
 The manner and escape you all shall see.

Eltham. Which all good Skelton ?

Skelton. Why all these lookers on :
 Whom if we please, the king will sure be pleas'd.
 Look to your entrance ; get you in Sir John.

[*Exit Sir John.*]

My shift is long, for I play Friar Tuck ;
 Wherein, if Skelton have but any luck,
 He'll thank his hearers oft with many a duck.
 For many talk of Robin Hood, that never shot in his bow,
 But Skelton writes of Robin Hood what he doth truly
 know.*

Therefore I pray ye,
 Contentedly stay ye,
 And take no offending,
 But sit to the ending,

* This is, in some sort, a parody upon the well-known proverb, which is thus given by Ray :

“ Many talk of Robin Hood, that never shot in his bow,

And many talk of Little John, that never did him know.”

It is also found in Camden's Remains by Philpot, 1636, p. 302, though the two lines, obviously connected in sense, are there separated.

Likewise I desire
 Ye would not admire
 My rhyme, so I shift;
 For this is my drift,
 So mought I well thrive,
 To make ye all blithe:
 But if ye once frown,
 Poor Skelton goes down;
 His labour and cost,
 He thinketh all lost,
 In tumbling of books
 Of marry go looks.
 The Sheriff with staves,
 With catchpoles and knaves,
 Are coming I see:
 High time 'tis for me,
 To leave off my babble,
 And fond ribble rabble.
 Therefore with this court'sy
 Awhile I will leave ye.*

* This sort of verse, from the frequent use of it made by Skelton in his poems, acquired the name of *Skeltonic* or *Skeltonical*. According to the manner in which the poet's character is drawn, he could not avoid falling into the use of it, even out of its place, in the course of the play; and of this a singular instance is given after the capture and discovery of Ely, when Sir John Eltham in one of the interlocutions, complains of Skelton, that in performing the part of Friar Tuck he fell

“ ————— into the vein
 Of ribble rabble rhimes Skeltonical.”

In 1589 was published a tract with the following curious title.

“ A Skeltonical salutation,
 Or condigne gratulation,
 And just vexation
 Of the Spanish nation;
 That in bravado
 Spent many a crusado
 In setting forth an Armado
 England to invado.”

The whole piece is in this kind of verse. A copy of it is in the British Museum.

Puttenham speaking of poetry of this sort, says “ Such were the mes of Skelton (usurping the name of a Poet Laureat) being in

SCENE II.

Enter, as it were in haste, the PRIOR OF YORK, the SHERIFF, Justice WARMAN, Steward to Robin Hood.

Prior. Here, master Warman, there's a hundred crowns
For your good will and furtherance in this.

Warman. I thank you my Lord Prior. I must away
To shun suspicion, but be resolute,
And we will take him, have no doubt of it.

Prior. But is Lord Sentloe and the other come?

Warman. Lord Sentloe, Sir Hugh Lacy, and Sir Gilbert Broughton
Are there, and as they promised you last night,
Will help to take him when the Sheriff comes.

[*Exit Warman.*]

Prior. Awhile, farewell, and thanks to them and you.
Come, master Sheriff, the outlawry is proclaim'd,
Send therefore quickly for more company,
And at the back gate we will enter in.

Sheriff. We shall have much ado, I am afraid.

Prior. No, they are very merry at a feast;
A feast where Marian, daughter to Lord Lacy,*
Is troth-plighted to wasteful Huntington;
And at the feast, are my especial friends,
Whom he suspects not. Come we'll have him, man,
And for your pains here is a hundred marks.

Sheriff. I thank your lordship : we'll be diligent.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, LITTLE JOHN following him ; the one Earl of Huntington, the other his servant ; Robin having his napkin on his shoulder, as if he were suddenly raised from dinner.

Robin. As I am outlaw'd from my fame and state,

deeds but a rude rayling, rimer and all his doings ridiculous : he used both short distances and short measures, pleasing onely to the popular eare : in our courtly maker we banish them utterly. *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, p. 69.

* It ought to be "daughter to Fitzwater." The same confusion will be observed again afterwards.

Be this day outlawed from the name of days.

Day luckless, outlaw luckless, both accurst!

[Flings away his napkin, hat, and sitteth down.]

Little John. Do not forget your honorable state,
Nor the true noblesse of your worthy house.

Robin. Do not persuade me; vain as vanity
Are all thy comforts: I am comfortless.

Little John. Hear me, my lord.

Robin. What shall I hear thee say?

Already hast thou said too much to hear:

Already hast thou stabb'd me with thy tongue,

- And the wide wound with words will not be clos'd.

Am I not outlaw'd by the Prior of York?

Proclaim'd in court, in city, and in town,

A lawless person? this thy tongue reports,

And therefore seek not to make smooth my grief;

For the rough storm, thy windy words have rais'd,

Will not be calm'd, till I in grave be laid.

Little John. Have patience yet.

Robin. Yea, now indeed thou speakest.

Patience hath power to bear a greater cross

Than honour's spoil, or any earthly loss.

Little John. Do so, my lord.

Robin. I, now I would begin:

But see, another scene of grief comes in.

*Enter MARIAN.**

Marian. Why is my lord so sad? wherefore so soon,
So suddenly, arose ye from the board?

Alas, my Robin, what distempering grief

Drinks up the roseate colour of thy cheeks?

Why art thou silent? answer me my love.

Robin. Let him, let him, let him make thee as sad.

He hath a tongue can banish thee from joy,

And chase thy crimson colour from thy cheeks.

Why speak'st thou not? I pray thee, Little John,

Let the short story of my long distress

* Matilda is here, and elsewhere, called Marian, before in fact she takes that name; and after she has assumed it, in the course of the play she is frequently called Matilda.

Be utter'd in a word. What, mean'st thou to protract?
Wilt thou not speak? then Marian list to me.
This day thou wert a maid, and now a spouse,
Anon (poor soul) a widow thou must be!
Thy Robin is an outlaw, Marian;
His goods and lands must be extended on,
Himself exil'd from thee, thou kept from him
By the long distance of unnumbered miles.

[*She sinks in his arms.*]

Faint'st thou at this? speak to me Marian:
My old love, newly met, part not so soon;
We have a little time to tarry yet.

Marian. If but a little time, let me not stay.
Part we to day, then will I die to day!

Little John. For shame my lord! with courage of a
man,
Bridle this over-grieving passion,
Or else dissemble it to comfort her.

Robin. I like thy counsel. Marian clear these clouds,
And with the sunny beams of thy bright eyes
Drink up these mists of sorrow that arise.

Marian. How can I joy, when thou art banished?

Robin. I tell thee, love, my grief is counterfeit;
And I abruptly from the table rose,
The banquet being almost at an end,
Only to drive confused and sad thoughts
Into the minds of the invited guests.
For, gentle love, at great or nuptial feasts,
With comic sports, or tragic stately plays,
We use to recreate the feasted guests,
Which, I am sure, our kinsfolk do expect.

Marian. Of this what then? this seems of no effect.

Robin. Why thus of this: as Little John can tell,
I had bespoken quaint comedians;
But great John, John the prince, my liege's brother,
My rival, Marian, he that cross'd our love,
Hath cross'd me in this jest,* and at the court

* Jest is used in the same sense in *The Spanish Tragedy*, A. I.
where the King exclaims:—

But where is old Hieronimo, our marshal?

Employs the players should have made us sport.
 This was the tidings brought by Little John,
 That first disturb'd me, and begot this thought
 Of sudden rising, which by this, I know,
 Hath with amazement, troubled all our guests.
 Go in, good love : thou as the chorus shalt
 Express the meaning of my silent grief,
 Which is no more but this : I only mean
 (The more to honor our right noble friends)
 Myself in person to present some scenes
 Of tragic matter, or perchance of mirth,
 Ev'n such as first shall jump with my conceit.

Marian. May I be bold thou hast the worst express'd ?

Little John. Fair mistress, all is true my lord hath said.

Robin. It is, it is.

Marian. Speak not so hollow then :

So sigh, and sadly speak true sorrowing men.

Robin. Believe me love, believe me (I beseech)

My first scene tragic is, therefore tragic speech,

And accents filling woeful action,

I strive to get.

I pray thee sweet go in, and with thy sight,

Appease the many doubts that may arise.

That done, be thou their usher, bring them to this place,

And thou shalt see me with a lofty verse

Bewitch the hearers' ears, and tempt their eyes

To gaze upon the action that I use.

Marian. If it be but a play, I'll play my part :

But sure some earnest grief affrights my heart.

Little John. Let me entreat ye, Madam, not to fear,

For by the honesty of Little John

It's but a tragic scene we have in hand,

Only to fit the humour of the Queen,

Who is the chiefest at your troth-plight feast.

He promis'd us, in honor of our guest,

To grace our banquet with some pompous *jest*.

Dr. Farmer in reference to the line in Richard II. A. I. scene 3.

"As gentle and as jocund as to *jest*"

notes the above passage from *The Spanish Tragedy* to shew that to *jest* "in old language means to play a part in a mask."

Marian. Then will I fetch her Highness and the rest.
[Exit.]

Robin. I, that same jealous Queen, whose doating age
Envies the choice of my fair Marian,
She hath a hand in this.

Little John. Well, what of that?
Now must your honor leave these mourning tunes,
And thus by my areed you shall provide.
Your plate and jewels I will straight pack up,
And toward Nottingham convey them hence.
At Rowford, Sowtham, Wortley, Hothersfield,
Of all your cattle, money shall be made;
And I at Mansfield will attend your coming,
Where we'll determine which way's best to take.

Robin. Well be it so, a God's name let it be;
And, if I can, Marian shall come with me.

Little John. Else care will kill her. Therefore, if you
please,
At th' utmost corner of the garden wall,
Soon in the evening wait for Marian;
And as I go I'll tell her of the place.
Your horses at the Bell shall ready be,
I mean Belsavage;* whence as citizens,
That meant to ride for pleasure some small way,
You shall set forth.

Robin. Be it as thou dost say. Farewell awhile:
In spite of grief thy love compels me smile,
But now our audience comes, we must look sad.†

* Ritson has the following note upon this sign. "That is, the inn so called, upon Ludgate Hill. The modern sign, which however seems to have been the same 200 years ago, is a bell and a wild man; but the original is supposed to have been a beautiful Indian and the inscription, *La belle Sauvage*. Some indeed assert that the inn once belonged to a Lady *Arabella Sauvage*; and others that its name originally the *belle* and *Sauvage* arose (like the *George and Blue Boar*) from the junction of two inns with those respective signs. *Non nostrum est tantas componere lites.*" *Robin Hood*, l. p. liv.

† Little John's exit is marked here in the old copy, but it does not take place till afterwards: he first whispers Marian, as we are told immediately; "John" in the original standing for Little John.

Enter QUEEN ELINOR, MARIAN, SENTLOE, LACY, BROUGHTON, WARMAN *Robin's Steward. As they meet, Little John whispers with Marian, and exit.*

Queen Elinor. How now, my Lord of Huntington? The mistress of your love, fair Marian, Tells us, your sudden rising from the banquet Was but a humour, which you mean to purge In some high tragic lines, or comic jests.

Robin. Sit down fair Queen, (the Prologue's part is play'd :

Marian hath told ye, what I bad her tell)
Sit down Lord Sentloe, cousin Lacy sit :
Sir Gilbert Broughton, yea, and Warman sit :
Though you my steward be, yet for your gathering wit,
I give you place : sit down, sit down, I say :
God's pity ! sit : it must, it must be so,
For you will sit, when I shall stand, I know.

[*Sits them all down.*

And, Marian, you may sit among the rest,
I pray ye do, or else rise, stand apart :
These helps shall be beholders of my smart.—
You that with ruthless eyes my sorrows see,
And came prepar'd to feast at my sad fall,
Whose envy, greediness, and jealousy
Afford me sorrow endless, comfort small,
Know what you knew before, what you ordain'd
To cross the spousal banquet of my love,
That I am outlaw'd by the Prior of York,
My traitorous uncle, and your trothless friend.
Smile you, Queen Elinor? laugh'st thou, Lord Sentloe?
Lacy, look'st thou so blithe at my lament?
Broughton, a smooth brow graceth your stern face ;
And you are merry, Warman, at my moan.
The Queen except, I do you all defy !
You are a sort* of fawning sycophants,
That while the sun-shine of my greatness 'dur'd,

* i. e. a collection or company, and not as we now use the word a kind "of fawning sycophants." See Note 4 to *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, D. O. P. Vol. II., and Note 15 to *The Honest Whore*, part II. D. O. P. Vol. III.

Revelled out all my day for your delights;
 And now ye see the black night of my woe
 O'ershade the beauty of my smiling good,
 You to my grief add grief; and are agreed
 With that false Prior, to reprieve my joys
 From execution of all happiness.

Warman. Your honor thinks not ill of me, I hope.

Robert. Judas speaks first, with "Master, is it I?"
 No, my false steward; your accounts are true;
 You have dishonor'd me, I worshipp'd* you.
 You from a paltry pen-and-inkhorn clerk,
 Bearing a buckram satchel at your belt,
 Unto a justice place I did prefer;
 Where you unjustly have my tenants rack'd,
 Wasted my treasure, and increas'd your store.
 Your sire contented with a cottage poor,
 Your mastership hath halls and mansions built;
 Yet are you innocent, as clear from guilt
 As is the ravenous mastiff that hath spilt
 The blood of a whole flock, yet slily comes
 And couches in his kennel, with smear'd chaps.
 Out of my house! for yet my house it is,
 And follow him, ye catchpole-bribed grooms;
 For neither are ye lords, nor gentlemen,
 That will be hired to wrong a nobleman:
 For hired ye were, last night, I know it, I,
 To be my guests, my faithless guests this day,
 That your kind host you trothless might betray.
 But hence, and help the sheriff at the door,
 Your worst attempt. Fell traitors, as you be,
 Avoid, or I will execute ye all,
 Ere any execution come at me! *[they run away]*
 They ran away, so ends the tragedy.

(aside) Marian, by Little John, my mind you know:
 If you will, do; if not, why be it so. *[offers to go]*

Queen Elinor. No words to me, Earl Robert, as
 you go?

* i. e. made a Justice of Peace of him, entitling him to the *style* of *Worship*.

Robin. Oh, to your Highness? yes; adieu, proud Queen;

Had not you been, thus poor I had not been. [Exit.

Queen Elinor. Thou wrong'st me Robert, Earl of Huntington,

And were it not for pity of this maid,
I would revenge the words that thou hast said.

Marian. Add not, fair Queen, distress unto distress,
But, if you can, for pity make his less.

Queen Elinor. I can and will forget deserving hate,
And give him comfort in this woeful state.

Marian, I know Earl Robert's whole desire

Is to have thee with him from hence away;

And though I lov'd him dearly to this day,

Yet since I see he dearlier loveth thee,

Thou shalt have all the furtherance I may.

Tell me, fair girl, and see thou truly tell,

Whether this night, to morrow, or next day,

There be no 'pointment for to meet thy love?

Marian. There is, this night there is; I will not lie,
And be it disappointed I shall die.

Queen Elinor. Alas, poor soul! my son, Prince John
my son,

With several troops hath circuited the court,

This house, the city, that thou canst not scape.

Marian. I will away with death, though he be grim,
If they deny me to go hence with him.

Queen Elinor. Marian,

Thou shalt go with him clad in my attire,

And for a shift, I'll put thy garments on.

It is not me my son John doth desire,

But Marian it is thee he doateth on.

When thou and I are come into the field,

Or any other place where Robin stays,

Me in thy clothes the ambush will beset;

Thee in my robes they dare not once approach:

So while with me a reasoning they stay,

At pleasure thou with him may'st ride away.

Marian. I am beholding to your majesty,
And of this plot will send my Robin word.

Queen Elinor. Nay never trouble him, lest it breed suspect :

But get thee in, and shift of thy attire :
My robe is loose and it will soon be off.
Go, gentle Marian, I will follow thee,
And from betrayers' hands will set thee free.

Marian. I thank your highness, but I will not trust ye :
My Robert shall have knowledge of this shift,
For I conceive already your deep drift. [*Aside.—Exit.*]

Queen Elinor. Now shall I have my will of Huntington.
Who, taking me this night for Marian,
Will hurry me away instead of her ;
For he dares not stand trifling to confer.
Faith, pretty Marian, I shall meet with you,*
And with your lovely sweetheart Robert too :
For when we come unto a baiting place,
If with like love my love he do not grace,
Of treason capital I will accuse him,
For trait'rous forcing me out of the court,
And guerdon his disdain with guilty death,
That of a prince's love so lightly weighs. [*Exit*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter LITTLE JOHN *fighting with the Sheriff and his Men ;* WARMAN *persuading him.*

Little John. Warman stand off !
Tit tattle ; tell not me what ye can do :
The goods I say are mine, and I say true.

Warman. I say the Sheriff must see them ere they go

Little John. You say so, Warman, Little John says no

Sheriff. I say I must, for I am the king's Shrieve.

Little John. Your must is false ; your office I believe

Watch. Down with him ! down with him !

Little John. Ye bark at me like curs, but I will dow
With twenty "stand, and who goes there"† of you,

* i. e. perhaps "I shall be even with you." So Pisaro in Haughton's *Englishmen for my Money*, says of his three daughters

"Well I shall find a tune to meet with them."—Sig. E. 2.

† Alluding to the challenges of the officers who are aiding and assisting the Sheriff.

If ye stand long tempting my patience.

Why, master Sheriff, think you me a fool?

What justice is there you should search my trunks,
Or stay my goods for that my master owes?

Sheriff. Here's Justice Warman, steward to your lord,
Suspects some coin, some jewels, or some plate
That 'longs unto your lord, are in your trunks,
And the extent is out for all his goods ;
Therefore we ought to see none be convey'd.

Warman. True, Little John ; I am the sorrier.

Little John. A plague upon ye else, how sore ye weep !
Why, say, thou upstart, that there were some help,
Some little, little help in this distress,
To aid our lord and master comfortless,
Is it thy part, thou screen fac'd snotty nose,
To hinder him that gave thee all thou hast ?

Enter Justice WARMAN'S WIFE oddly attired.

Wife. Who's that, husband ? you, you ! means he you ?

Warman. I, by'r lady is it, I thank him.

Wife. Ah, ye kneve you ! God's pity, husband, why
dis no your worship send the kneve to Newgate ?

Little John. Well, master Sheriff, shall I pass or no ?

Sheriff. Not without search.

Little John. Then here the casket stands
Any that dares unto it set their hands,
Let him begin.

Wife. Do hisband ; you are a majesty : I warrant there's
old knacks, chains, and other toys.

Little John. But not for you, good madam beetle-brows.

Wife. Out upon him ! By my truly, master Justice,
and ye do not clap him up, I will sue a bill of remorse,
and never come between a pair of sheets with ye. Such
a kneve as this ! down with him, I pray.

[*Set upon him : he knocks some down.*

Wife. Ah, good Lord ! come not, near good hisband ;
only charge him ; charge him ! Ah, good God ! help, help !

*Enter PRINCE JOHN, the BISHOP OF ELY, the PRIOR
OF YORK, with others. All stay.*

John. What tumult have we here ? who doth resist
The king's writs with such obstinate contempt ?

Wife. This kneve.

Warman. This rebel.

John. How now, Little John,
Have you no more discretion than you shew?

Ely. Lay hold, and clap the traitor by the heels.

Little John. I am no traitor, my good Lord of Ely.
First hear me, then commit me, if you please.

John. Speak and be brief.

Little John. Here is a little box,
Containing all my gettings twenty year,
Which is mine own, and no man's but mine own :
This they would rifle, this I do defend,
And about this we only do contend.

John. You do the fellow wrong : his goods are his.
You only must extend upon the Earl's.

Prior. That was, my lord, but now is Robert Hood ;
A simple yoeman, as his servants were.

Wife. Back with that leg, my Lord Prior : there be
some, that were his servants, think foul scorn to be
called yeomen.

Prior. I cry your worship mercy, mistress Warman :
The squire your husband was his servant once.

Little John. A scurvy squire, with reverence of these
lords.

Wife. Does he not speak treason, pray ?

Ely. Sirrah ye are too saucy : get you hence.

Warman. But hear me first, my lords, with patience.
This scoffing, careless fellow, Little John,
Hath loaden hence a horse 'twixt him and Much,
A silly rude knave, Much the Miller's son.

Enter MUCH, Clown.

Much. I am here to answer for myself, and have taken
you in two lies at once : first, Much is no knave, neither
was it a horse Little John and I loaded, but a little cur-
tal of some five handfuls high, sib to the ape's only
beast at Paris garden.*

* Paris Garden, (or as it is printed in the old copy, *Parish Gar-*
den), was a place where bears were baited and other animals kept.
Curtal was a common term for a small horse, and that which Banks

Little John. But, Master Warman, you have loaded
carts,
And turned my lord's goods to your proper use.
Whoever hath the right, you do the wrong,
And are ———

Wife. What is he, kneve?

Little John. Unworthy to be nam'd a man.

Much. And I'll be sworn for his wife,

Wife. I, so thou mayst, Much.

Much. That she sets new marks of all my old lady's
linen (God rest her soul) and my young lord never had
them since.

Wife. Out, out! I took him them but for to whiten,
as God mend me.

Ely. Leave off this idle talk : get ye both hence.

Little John. I thank your honors : we are not in love
With being here,
We must seek service that are masterless.

[*Exeunt Much and Little John.*

Ely. Lord Prior of York, here's your commission.
You are best make speed, lest in his country houses,
By his appointment all his herds be sold.

Prior. I thank your honor, taking humble leave.

[*Exit.*

Ely. And, master Warman, here's your patent sealed
For the High Sheriffrick of Nottingham ;
Except the king our master do repeal
This gift of our's.

John. Let him the while possess it.

Ely. A God's name let him ; he hath my good will.

[*Exit.*

John. Well, Warman, this proud priest I cannot brook.

owned, and which acquired so much celebrity for its sagaciousness,
is so called by Webster,

————— and some there are
Will keep a *curtal* to shew juggling tricks,
And give out 'tis a spirit.

Vit'oria Corombona, D. O. P. vol. vi. p. 243.

Sib is related to ; and perhaps the *Apes only beast* at *Paris Garden*,
may apply to Banks's poney. Dekker in his *Villanies Discovered*,
1620, mentions in terms "*Bankes his Curtal*."

But to our other matter : send thy wife away.

Warman. Go in, good wife, the Prince with me hath private conference.

Wife. By my troth ye will anger me : now ye have the pattern, ye should call me nothing but Mistress Sheriff ; for I tell you I stand upon my replications. [*Ex.*

John. Thinkest thou that Marian means
To scape this evening hence with Robin Hood ?
The horse-boy told me so ; and here he comes,
Disguised like a citizen, methinks.

Warman let's in ; I'll fit him presently :

Only for Marian am I now his enemy. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ROBIN like a citizen.

Robin. Earl John* and Warman, two good friends of mine :

I think they knew me not, or if they did
I care not what can follow. I am sure
The sharpest end is death, and that will come.
But what of death or sorrow do I dream ?
My Marian, my fair life, my beauteous love
Is coming, to give comfort to my grief,
And the sly Queen, intending to deceive,
Hath taught us how we should her sleights deceive.
But who is this ? God's pity ! here's Prince John.
We shall have some good rule with him anon.

John. Good even, sir. This clear evening should portend

Some frost I think : how judge you honest friend ?

Robin. I am not weather-wise ; but it may be,
We shall have hard frost ; for true charity,
Good dealing, faithful friendship, honesty,
Are chill-cold, dead with cold.

John. Oh, good sir, stay,
That frost hath lasted many a bitter day.
Know ye no frozen hearts that are belov'd ?

Robin. Love is a flame, a fire, that being moved,
Still brighter grows. But say, are you beloved ?

John. I would be, if I be not : but pass that.
Are ye a dweller in this city, pray ?

* In the course of the play John is sometimes called *Earl John*, and sometimes *Prince John*, as it seems, indifferently.

Robin. I am; and for a gentlewoman stay,
That rides some four or five mile in great haste.

*Enter QUERN, MARIAN.**

John. I see your labour, sir, is not in waste.
For here come two: are either of these yours?

Robin. Both are—one must.

John. Which do you most respect?

Robin. The youngest and the fairest I reject.

John. Robin, I'll try you, whether ye say true. [*aside.*

Robin. As you with me, so John I'll jest with you. [*aside.*

Queen Elinor. Marian, let me go first to Robin Hood,
And I will tell him what we do intend.

Marian. Do what your highness please; your will is
mine.

John. My mother is with gentle Marian:
Oh, it doth grieve her to be left behind.

Queen Elinor. Shall we away my Robin, lest the queen
Betray our purpose? sweet, let us away:
I have great will to go, no heart to stay.

Robin. Away with thee? No; get thee far away
From me, foul Marian, fair though thou be nam'd;
For thy bewitching eyes have raised storms,
That have my name and noblesse ever sham'd;
Prince John, my dear friend once, is now for thee
Become an unrelenting enemy.

John. But I'll relent and love thee, if thou leave her.

Robin. And Elinor my sovereign's mother, Queen,
That yet retains true passion in her breast,
Stands mourning yonder. Hence! I thee detest.
I will submit me to her Majesty.

Great Princess, if you will but ride with me,
A little of my way, I will express
My folly past, and humble pardon beg.

Marian. I grant, Earl Robert, and I thank thee too.

Queen Elinor. She's not the queen; sweet Robin, it is I.

Robin. Hence, sorceress! thy beauty I defy.
If thou have any love at all to me,
Bestow it on Prince John; he loveth thee.

[Exeunt Robin, Marian.]

* It must be recollected, that the Queen and Marian have exchanged dresses.

John. And I will love thee, Robin, for this deed,
And help thee, too, in thy distressful need.

Queen Elinor. Wilt thou not stay nor speak, proud
Huntington?

Ay me! some whirlwind hurries them away.

John. Follow him not fair love that from thee flies,
But fly to him that gladly follows thee.

Wilt thou not, girl? turn'st thou away from me?

Queen Elinor. Nay, we shall have it then,
If my quaint son his mother 'gin to court.

John. Wilt thou not speak, fair Marian, to Prince
John,

That loves thee well?

Queen Elinor. Good sir, I know you do.

John. That can maintain thee?

Queen Elinor. I, I know you can,
But hitherto I have maintained you.

John. My princely mother!

Queen Elinor. I, my princely son.

John. Is Marian then gone hence with Huntington?

Queen Elinor. I, she is gone; ill may they either thrive.

John. Mother, they must go whom the devil drives;
For your sharp fury, and infernal rage,
Your scorn of me, your spite to Marian,
Your overdoating love to Huntington,
Hath cross'd yourself, and me it hath undone.

Queen Elinor. I in mine own deceit, have met deceit:
In brief the manner thus I will repeat.

I knew, with malice that the prior of York
Pursued Earl Robert; and I furthered it,
Though, God can tell, for love of Huntington.
For thus I thought, when he was in extremes,
Need, and my love would win some good regard
From him to me, if I reliev'd his want.

To this end came I to the mock spouse feast;
To this end made I change for Marian's weed,
That me, for her, Earl Robert should receive:
But now I see they both of them agreed,
In my deceit, I might myself deceive.

Come in with me; come in, and meditate
How to turn love to never changing hate.

[Exit]

John. In by yourself ; I pass not for your spells.
Of youth and beauty still you are the foe :
The curse of Rosamond rests on your head,
Fair Rose confounded by your canker's hate.*
Oh ! that she were not as to me she is,
A mother, whom by nature I must love,
Then would I tell her, she were too, too base,
To doat thus on a banish'd careless groom :
Then should I tell her, that she were too fond,
To thrust fair Marian to an exile's hand.

Enter a MESSENGER from Ely.

Messenger. My lord, my lord of Ely sends for you,
About important business of the state.

John. Tell the proud prelate I am not dispos'd
Nor in estate to come at his command.

[*Smites him ; he bleeds.*

Begone with that, or tarry and take this.

'Zwounds ! are ye listning for an after-errand ? [*Exit Mess.*

I'll follow, with revengeful murd'rous hate,
The banish'd, beggar'd, bankrupt Huntington.

Enter SIMON, Earl of Leicester.

Leicester. How now, prince John ? body of me ! I
muse

What mad moods toss ye in this busy time
To wound the messenger that Ely sent,
By our consents ? i'faith ye did not well.

John. Leicester, I meant it Ely, not his man :
His servant's head but bleeds, he headless shall
From all the issues of his traitor neck
Pour streams of blood, till he be bloodless left.
By earth it shall, by heaven it shall be so !
Leicester it shall, though all the world say no.

Leicester. It shall, it shall ; but how shall it be done ?
Not with a stormy tempest of sharp words,
But slow, still speeches, and effecting deeds.
Here comes old Lacy, and his brother Hugh :
One is our friend, the other is not true.

* Perhaps the proper reading is *cancerous* or "*cankorous* hate," but the 4to. has it as it is reprinted.

Enter LORD LACY, SIR HUGH, and his boy.

Lacy. Hence treachor as thou art! by God's blest mother!

I'll lop thy legs off, though thou be my brother,
If with thy flattering tongue thou seek to hide
Thy traiterous purpose. Ah, poor Huntington,
How in one hour have villains thee undone!

Hugh. If you will not believe what I have sworn,
Conceit your worst. My lord of Ely knows
That what I say is true.

Lacy. Still facest thou?
Draw boy, and quickly see that thou defend thee.

Leicester. Patience Lord Lacy! get you gone Sir
Hugh;

Provoke him not, for he hath told you true:
You know it, that I know the Prior of York,
Together with my good lord chancellor,
Corrupted you, Lord Sentloe, Broughton, Warman,
To feast with Robert on his day of fall.

Hugh. They lie that say it: I defy ye all.

John. Now, by the rood, thou liest. Warman him-
self,
That creeping Judas, joy'd, and told it me.

Lacy. Let me, my lords, revenge me of this wretch,
By whom my daughter and her love were lost.

John. For her let me revenge: with bitter cost,
Shall Sir Hugh Lacy and his fellows buy
Fair Marian's loss, lost by their treachery;
And thus I pay it. [*Stabs him; he falls; boy runs in.*]

Leicester. Sure payment John.

Lacy. There let the villain lie.
For this, old Lacy honours thee, prince John:
One treacherous soul is sent to answer wrong.

Enter ELY, CHESTER, OFFICERS, Hugh, Lacy's Boy.

Boy. Here, here, my lord! look where my master lies.

Ely. What murd'rous hand hath kill'd this gentle
knight,
Good Sir Hugh Lacy, steward of my lands?

John. Ely, he died by this princely hand.

Ely. Unprincely deed ! Death asketh death you know.
Arrest him officers.

John. Oh, sir, I will obey.
You will take bail, I hope.

Chester. 'Tis more, sir, than he may.

Leicester. Chester, he may by law, and therefore shall.

Ely. Who are his bail ?

Leicester. I.

Lacy. And I.

Ely. You are confederates.

John. Holy lord, you lie.

Chester. Be reverend, Prince John : my lord of Ely,
You know, is Regent for his Majesty.

John. But here are letters from his Majesty,
Sent out of Joppa, in the Holy Land,
To you, to these, to me, to all the state,
Containing a repeal of that large grant,
And free authority to take the seal
Into the hands of three lords temporal ;
And the lord archbishop of Roan, he sent.
And he shall yield it, or as Lacy lies,
Desertfully, for pride and treason stabb'd,
He shall ere long lie. Those that intend as I
Follow this steely ensign, lift on high.

[*Lifts up his drawn sword. Exit, cum Leicester and Lacy.*]

Ely. A thousand thousand ensigns of sharp steel,
And feather'd arrows from the bow of death,
Against proud John, wrong'd Ely will employ.
My lord of Chester, let me have your aid,
To lay the pride of haught* usurping John.

* *Haught*, is frequently used for *haughty*, when the poet wants to abridge it of a syllable : thus Shakespeare in *Richard III.* A. II. sc. 3.

"And the Queen's sons and brothers *haught* and proud."
He has also "the *haught* Northumberland" and "the *haught* Protector."

Kyd in *Cornelia*, A. IV. also has this line.

"Pompey, the second Mars, whose *haught* renown."

Chester. Some other course than war let us bethink :
If it may be, let not uncivil broils
Our civil hands defile.

Ely. God knows, that I
For quiet of the realm would aught forbear :
But give me leave, my noble lord, to fear,
When one I dearly lov'd, is murdered,
Under the colour of a little wrong,
Done to the wasteful Earl of Huntington ;
Whom John I know doth hate unto the death,
Only for love he bears to Lacy's daughter.

Chester. My lord, it's plain this quarrel is but pick'd
For an inducement to a greater ill ;
But we will call the council of estate,
At which the mother Queen shall present be :
Thither by summons shall Prince John be call'd,
Leicester and Lacy, who, it seems,
Favor some factious purpose of the Prince.

Ely. You have advised well, my lord of Chester ;
And as you counsel, so do I conclude.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, MATILDA, *at one door* ; LITTLE JOHN, *and* MUCH the MILLER'S SON, *at another door.*

Much. Luck, I beseech thee, marry and amen !
Blessing betide them ! it be them indeed.
Ah, my good lord, for and my little lady.*

Robin. What, Much and John ! well met in this ill time.

Little John. In this good time my lord ; for being met,
The world shall not depart us till we die.†

Matilda. Sayst thou me so, John ? as I am true maid,
If I live long, well shall thy love be paid.

Much. Well, there be on us, simple though we stand
here, have as much love in 'em as Little John.

* The word *for* in this line is useless.

† i. e. " shall not separate us till we die." See note 9 to *The Miseries of enforced Marriage*. D. O. P. v. 14. See also Mr. Gifford's note to *The Renegado*. Massinger's Works, II. 136.

Matilda. Much, I confess thou lov'st me very much,
And I will more reward it than with words.

Much. Nay, I know that; but we miller's children
love the cog a little, and the fair speaking.

Robin. And is it possible that Warman's spite
Should stretch so far, that he doth hunt the lives,
Of bonny Scarlet, and his brother Scathlock.

Much. Oh, I, sir: Warman came but yesterday to
take charge of the jail at Nottingham, and this day he
says he will hang the two outlaws. He means to set them
at liberty.

Matilda. Such liberty God send the peevish wretch,
In his most need.

Robin. Now, by my honor's hope,
Yet buried in the low dust of disgrace,
He is to blame. Say, John, where must they die:

Little John. Yonder's their mother's house, and here
the tree,

Whereon, poor men, they must forego their lives:
And yonder comes a lazy lozel* Friar,
That is appointed for their confessor;
Who, when we brought your money to their mothers,
Was wishing her to patience for their deaths.

Enter FRIAR TUCK, and RALPH, Warman's man.

Ralph. I am timorous, sir, that the prigioners are
passed from the jail.

Friar. Soft, sirrah! by my order I protest,
Ye are too forward: 'tis no game, no jest,
We go about.

Robin. Matilda, walk afore
To widow Scarlet's house; look where it stands.
Much, man your lady: Little John and I
Will come unto you thither presently.

Much. Come, madam; my lord has 'pointed the pro-
perer man to go before ye.

Matilda. Be careful, Robin, in this time of fear.

[*Exeunt Much, Matilda.*]

* See Note 66 to *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. D.O.P. Vol. ii.
p. 48.

Friar. Now, by the reliques of the holy mass,
A pretty girl, a very bonny lass.

Robin. Friar, how like you her?

Friar. Marry, by my hood,
I like her well, and wish her nought but good.

Ralph. Ye protract, master Friar. I obsecrate ye with
all courtesy, omitting compliment, you would vouch,
deign to proceed.

Friar. Deign, vouch, protract, compliment, obsecrate
Why, good-man tricks, who taught you thus to prate
Your name, your name? were you never christen'd?

Ralph. My nomination Radulf is, or Ralph :
Vulgars corruptly use to call me Rafe.

Friar. Oh, foul corruption of base palliardize,*
When idiots, witless, travail to be wise.
Age barbarous, times impious, men vicious!

Able to upraise,
Men dead many days,
That wanted to praise
The rhimes and the lays
Of Poets Laureate :
Whose verse did decorate,
And their lines 'lustrate
Both prince and potentate.
These, from their graves,
See asses and knaves,
Base idiot slaves,
With boastings and braves,
Offer to upfly,
To the heavens high,
With vain foolery,
And rude ribaldry.
Some of them write
Of beastly delight,
Suffering their lines
To flatter these times

* *Palliard* is to be found in Dryden's *Hind and Panther* : *palliardize* is not in very common use among our old writers. Dekker in his *Bellman of London*, 1616. Sign. D. 2, gives a description of *Palliard*. Tuck's exclamation looks as if it were quoted.

With pandarism base ;
And lust do uncase,
From the placket to the pap :
God send them ill-hap!
Some like quaint pedants,
Good wit's true recreants,
Ye cannot beseech
From pure Priscian speech.
Divers as nice,
Like this odd vice,
Are word-makers daily.
Others in courtesy,
Whenever they meet ye ;
With new fashions greet ye,
Changing each congee,
Sometime beneath knee,
With, " good sir, pardon me,"
And much more foolery,
Paltry and foppery,
Dissembling knavery :
Hands sometime kissing,
But honesty missing.
God give no blessing
To such base counterfeiting.

Little John. Stop, master Skelton ! whither will you run ?

Friar. God's pity ! Sir John Eltham, Little John, had forgot myself. But to our play.—

Come, good-man fashions, let us go our way,
Into this hanging business. Would, for me,
Some rescue, or reprieve might set them free.

[*Exeunt Friar, Ralph.*]

Robin. Heard'st thou not, Little John, the Friar's speech,

Is he asking for rescue, or a quick reprieve ?

Little John. He seems like a good fellow, my good lord.

Robin. He's a good fellow, John, upon my word.
Sound me thy horn, and get thee in to Much,
And when I blow this horn, come both and help me.

Little John. Take heed my lord : that villain Warman knows you,
And ten to one, he hath a writ against you.

Robin. Fear not.
Below the bridge a poor blind man doth dwell,
With him I will change my habit, and disguise :
Only be ready when I call for ye ;
For I will save their lives, if it may be.

Little John. I will do what you would immediately.
Enter WARMAN, SCARLET, and SCATHLOCK bound;
FRIAR TUCK, as their confessor; OFFICERS with halberts.

Warman. Master Friar, be brief; delay no time.
Scarlet and Scathlock, never hope for life:
Here is the place of execution,
And you must answer law for what is done.

Scarlet. Well, if there be no remedy, we must :
Though it ill seemeth, Warman, thou should'st be
So bloody to pursue our lives thus cruelly.

Scathlock. Our mother sav'd thee from the gallows,
Warman :

His father did prefer thee to thy Lord,
One mother had we both, and both our fathers,
To thee and to thy father, were kind friends.

Friar. Good fellows, here you see his kindness ends :
What he was once, he doth not now consider.
You must consider of your many sins :
This day, in death, your happiness begins.

Scarlet. If you account it happiness, good Friar,
To bear us company I you desire :
The more the merrier ; we are honest men.

Warman. Ye were first outlaws, then ye proved
thieves,
And now all carelessly ye scoff at death.
Both of your fathers were good honest men ;
Your mother lives, their widow, in good fame ;
But you are scapethrifts, unthrifts, villains, knaves,
And as ye lived by shifts shall die with shame.

Scathlock. Warman, good words, for all your bitter deeds :
Ill speech to wretched men is more than needs.

Enter RALPH, running.

Ralph. Sir, retire ye, for it hath thus succeeded : the carnifex, or executor, riding on an ill curtal, hath titubated or stumbled, and is now crippled, with broken or fractured tibiards, and sending you tidings of success, saith yourself must be his deputy.

Warman. Ill luck ! but, sirrah, you shall serve the turn :

The cords that bind them you shall hang them in.

Ralph. How are you, sir, of me opiniated ? not to possess your seneschalship, or shrievalty, not to be Earl of Nottingham, will Ralph be nominated by the base scandalous vociferation of a hangman !

Enter ROBIN HOOD, like an old man.

Robin. Where is the shrieve, kind friends ? I you beseech,

With his good worship let me have some speech.

Friar. There is the sheriff father : this is he.

Robin. Friar, good alms and many blessings ! thank thee.

Sir, you are welcome to this troublous shire :

Of this day's execution did I hear.

Scarlet and Scathlock murder'd my young son ;

Me have they robb'd, and helplessly undone.

Revenge I would, but I am old and dry :

Wherefore, sweet master for saint Charity,

Since they are bound, deliver them to me,

That for my son's blood, I reveng'd may be.

Scarlet. This old man lies : we ne'er did him such wrong.

Robin. I do not lie ; you wot it too, too well.

The deed was such as you may shame to tell ;

But I with all entreats might not prevail

With your stern stubborn minds, bent all to blood.

Shall I have such revenge then, master sheriff,

That with my son's loss may suffice myself ?

[Robin whispers with them.]

Warman. Do, father, what thou wilt, for they must die.

Friar. I never heard them touch'd with blood till now.

Warman. Notorious villains! and they made their
brags,

The Earl of Huntington would save their lives :

But he is down the wind, as all such shall,

That revel, waste, and spend, and take no care.

Robin. My horn once winded, I'll unbind my belt,
Whereat the swords and bucklers are fast tied.

[*To Scarlet and Scathlock.*

Scathlock. Thanks to your honour.—Father we
confess,

And were our arms unbound, we would upheave

Our sinful hands with sorrowing hearts to heaven.

Robin. I will unbind you, with the sheriff's leave.

Warman. Do; help him Ralph: go to them master
Friar.

Robin. And as ye blew your horns at my son's death,
So will I sound your knell with my best breath :

[*Sounds his horn.*

And here's a blade, that hangeth at my belt,

Shall make ye feel in death what my son felt.

*Enter LITTLE JOHN, and MUCH.** *Fight: the Friar,*
making as if he helped the Sheriff, knocks down his
men, crying, "Keep the king's peace!"

Ralph. Oh they must be hanged, father.

Robin. Thy master and thyself supply their rooms.
Warman, approach me not! tempt not my wrath,
For if thou do, thou diest remediless.

Warman. It is the outlaw'd Earl of Huntington.
Down with him Friar! Oh, thou dost mistake!†
Fly, Ralph, we die else! let us raise the shire.

[*Sheriff runs away, and his men.*

Friar. Farewell.—Earl Robert, as I am true Friar,
I had rather be thy clerk, than serve the Prior.

Robin. A jolly fellow. Scarlet know'st thou him?

* In the old copy Scarlet and Scathlock are also mentioned as entering at this juncture, but they were on the stage before.

† The mistake to which Warman alludes, is, that Friar Tuck takes part with Robin Hood, instead of assisting the Sheriff against him.

Scarlet. He is of York, and of Saint Mary's cloister ;
There where your greedy uncle is Lord Prior.

Much. Oh, murrain on ye ! have you two 'scap'd
hanging ?*

Hark ye, my lord : these two fellows kept at Barnsdale
Seven year, to my knowledge, and no man†—

Robin. Here is no biding, masters : get ye in,
Take a short blessing at your mother's hands.

Much, bear them company ; make Matilda merry :

John and myself will follow presently.

John, on a sudden thus I am resolv'd ;

To keep in Sherwood 'till the king's return,

And being outlaw'd, lead an outlaw's life.

(Seven years these brethren, being yeomen's sons,

Lived and scap'd the malice of their foes.)‡

How think'st thou, Little John, of my intent ?

Little John. I like your honor's purpose exceeding
well.

Robin. Nay, no more honor, I pray thee Little John ;
Henceforth I will be called Robin Hood.

Matilda shall be my maid Marian.

Come, John, friends all, for now begins the game ;

And after our deserts, so grow our fame. [Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter PRINCE JOHN, and his Lords, with Soldiers.

John. Now is this comet shot into the sea,
Or lies like slime upon the sullen earth.

Come, he is dead, else should we hear of him.

Salisbury. I know not what to think herein my lord.

* This incident, with some variations, is related in the old ballad of "Robin Hood rescuing the Widow's three sons from the Sheriff, when going to be executed." See Ritson's Robin Hood. II. 151.

† The old copy has a blank here ; but whether it was so in the original MS. ; whether a line has dropped out by accident, or whether it was meant that Much should be suddenly interrupted by Robin Hood must be matter of conjecture.

‡ So printed in the old copy, as if part of some poetical narrative.

Fitzwater. Ely is not the man I took him for :
I am afraid we shall have worse than he.

John. Why, good Fitzwater, whence doth spring
your fear?

Fitzwater. Him for his pride we justly have sup-
press'd ;
But prouder climbers are about to rise.

Salisbury. Name them, Fitzwater: know you any such?

John. Fitzwater means not any thing, I know ;
For if he did, his tongue would tell his heart.

Fitzwater. An argument of my free heart, my lord,
That lets the world be witness of my thought.
When I was taught, true dealing kept the school ;
Deeds were sworn partners with protesting words ;
We said and did ; these say and never mean.
This upstart protestation of no proof,
This, " I beseech you, sir, accept my love ;
Command me, use me ; oh, you are to blame,
That do neglect my everlasting zeal,
My dear, my kind affect ;" when God can tell,
A sudden puff of wind, a lightning flash,
A bubble on the stream doth longer dure,
Than doth the purpose of their promise bide.
A shame upon this peevish, apish age,
These crouching, hypocrite, dissembling times !
Well, well, God rid the patrons of these crimes,
Out of this land : I have an inward fear,
This ill, well-seeming sin will be bought dear.

Salisbury. My lord Fitzwater is inspired, I think.

John. I, with some devil : let the old fool dote.

Enter QUEEN MOTHER, CHESTER, SHERIFF of Kent,
SOLDIERS.

Queen Mother. From the pursuing of the hateful
priest,
And bootless search of Ely are we come.

John. And welcome is your sacred majesty ;
And Chester welcome, too, against your will.

Chester. Unwilling men come not without constraint ;
But uncompell'd comes Chester to this place,
Telling thee, John, that thou art much to blame,

To chase hence Ely, chancellor to the king;
To set thy footsteps on the cloth of state,
And seat thy body in thy brother's throne.

Salisbury. Who should succeed the brother, but the brother?

Chester. If one were dead, one should succeed the other.

Queen Mother. My son is king, my son then ought to reign.

Fitzwater. One son is king; the state allows not twain.

Salisbury. The subjects many years the king have miss'd.

Chester. But subjects must not chuse what king they list.

Queen Mother. Richard hath conquer'd kingdoms in the east.

Fitzwater. A sign he will not lose this in the west.

Salisbury. By Salisbury's honor, I will follow John.

Chester. So Chester will, to shun commotion.

Queen Mother. Why, John shall be but Richard's deputy.

Fitzwater. To that Fitzwater gladly doth agree.
And look to't lady, mind king Richard's love;
As you will answer't, do the king no wrong.

Queen Mother. Well said, old conscience, you keep still one song.

John. In your contentious humours, noble lords,
Peers, and upholders of the English state,
John silent stood, as one that did await
What sentence ye determin'd for my life:
But since you are agreed, that I shall bear
The weighty burthen of this kingdom's state,
Till the return of Richard, our dread king,
I do accept the charge; and thank you all,
That think me worthy of so great a place.

All. We all confirm you Richard's deputy.

Salisbury. Now shall I plague proud Chester.

Queen Mother. Sit you sure, Fitzwater.

Chester. For peace I yield to wrong.

John. Now, old man, for your daughter.

Fitzwater. To see wrong rule, my eyes run streams
of water. *[A noise within.]*

Enter COLLIERS, crying "a monster."

Colliers. A monster! a monster! bring her out Robin:
a monster! a monster!

Salisbury. Peace, gaping fellow! know'st thou where
thou art?

First Collier. Why, I am in Kent, within a mile of
Dover.

'S blood, where I am! peace, and a gaping fellow!

For all your dagger, wert not for your ging,*

I would knock my whipstock on your addle head.

Come, out with the monster, Robin.

Within. I come, I come. Help me, she scratches!

First Collier. I'll gee her the lash. Come out, ye bearded
witch. *[Bring forth Ely, with a yard in his hand
and linen cloth, dressed like a woman.]*

Ely. Good fellows, let me go! there's gold to drink
I am a man, though in a woman's weeds.

Yonder's Prince John: I pray ye let me go.

Queen Mother. What rude companions have we yonder,
Salisbury?

First Collier. Shall we take his money?

Second Collier. No, no: this is the thief that robbed
master Mighels, and came in like a woman in labour, I
warrant ye.

Salisbury. Who have ye here, honest Colliers?

Second Collier. A monster, a monster! a woman with
a beard, a man in a petticoat. A monster, a monster!

Salisbury. What my good Lord of Ely, is it you?—
Ely is taken, here's the Chancellor!

First Collier. Pray God we be not hanged for this trick.

Queen Mother. What, my good lord!

Ely. I, I, ambitious lady.

John. Who? my Lord Chancellor?

Ely. I, you proud usurper.

Salisbury. What, is your surplice turned to a smock?

Ely. Peace, Salisbury, thou changing weathercock.

* i. e. gang. So written by Milton, Jonson, and many of our best
authors.

Chester. Alas, my Lord, I grieve to see this sight.

Ely. Chester, it will be day for this dark night.

Fitzwater. Ely, thou wert the foe to Huntington :
Robin thou knew'st was my adopted son.

Oh, Ely, thou to him wert too, too cruel !

With him fled hence Matilda, my fair jewel.

For their wrong, Ely, and thy haughty pride,

I help'd Earl John ; but now I see thee low,

At thy distress my heart is full of woe.

Queen Mother. Needs must I see Fitzwater's overthrow.
John, I affect him not, he loves not thee :

Remove him John, lest thou removed be.

John. Mother, let me alone ; by one and one,
I will not leave one that envies our good.

My lord of Salisbury, give these honest colliers,

For taking Ely, each a hundred marks.

Salisbury. Come, fellows ; go with me.

Colliers. Thank ye faith. Farewell, monster.

[*Exeunt Salisbury, Colliers.*]

John. Sheriff of Kent, take Ely to your charge.
From Shrieve to Shrieve send him to Nottingham,
Where Warman, by our patent, is high shrieve.
There, as a traitor, let him be close kept,
And to his trial we will follow straight.

Ely. A traitor, John !

John. Do not expostulate :

You at your trial shall have time to prate.

[*Exeunt cum Ely.*]

Fitzwater. God, for thy pity, what a time is here !

John. Right gracious mother, would yourself and
Chester,

Would but withdraw you for a little space,

While I confer with my good lord Fitzwater ?

Queen. My lord of Chester, will you walk aside ?

Chester. Whither your highness please, thither I will.

[*Exeunt Chester and Queen.*]

John. Soldiers, attend the person of our mother.

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*]

Noble Fitzwater, now we are alone,

What oft I have desir'd I will entreat,

Touching Matilda, fled with Huntington.

Fitzwater. Of her what would you touch ? Touching
her flight,

She is fled hence with Robert, her true knight.

John. Robert is outlaw'd, and Matilda free ;
Why through his fault, should she exiled be ?
She is your comfort, all your age's bliss ;
Why should your age so great a comfort miss ?
She is all England's beauty, all her pride ;
In foreign lands why should that beauty bide ?
Call her again, Fitzwater, call again
Guiltless Matilda, beauty's sovereign.

Fitzwater. I grant, Prince John, Matilda was my joy,
And the fair sun that kept old winter's frost,
From griping dead the marrow of my bones ;
And she is gone, yet where she is, God wot,
Aged Fitzwater truly guesseth not.
But where she is, there is kind Huntington ;
With my fair daughter is my noble son.
If he may never be recall'd again,
To call Matilda back it is in vain.

John. Living with him, she lives in vicious state,
For Huntington is excommunicate ;
And till his debts be paid, by Rome's decree,
It is agreed, absolv'd he cannot be ;
And that can never be : so never wife,
But in a loath'd adulterous beggar's life,
Must fair Matilda live. This you may amend,
And win Prince John your ever during friend.

Fitzwater. As how ? as how ?

John. Call her from him : bring her to England's
court,
Where like fair Phœbe, she may sit as queen,
Over the sacred, honorable maids,
That do attend the royal Queen, my mother.
There shall she live a Prince's Cynthia,
And John will be her true Endymion.

Fitzwater. By this construction she should be the
moon,
And you would be the man within the moon.

John. A pleasant exposition, good Fitzwater :
But if it so fell out, that I fell in,
You of my full joys should be chief partaker.

Fitzwater. John, I defy thee ! by my honor's hope,
I will not bear this base indignity !
Take to thy tools ! think'st thou a nobleman
Will be a pandar to his proper child ?
For what intend'st thou else, seeing I know
Earl Chepstow's daughter is thy married wife.
Come, if thou be a right Plantagenet,
Draw and defend thee. Oh, our lady, help
True English lords, from such a tyrant lord !
What, dost thou think I jest ? Nay, by the rood,
I'll lose my life, or purge thy lustful blood.

John. What my old ruffian, lie at your ward ?*
Have at your froward bosom, old Fitzwater.

[*Fight : John falls.*

Enter QUEEN, CHESTER, SALISBURY, *hastily.*

Fitzwater. Oh, that thou wert not royal Richard's
brother,
Thou should'st here die in presence of thy mother.

[*John rises : all compass Fitzwater ; Fitzwater chafes.*
What, is he up ? Nay, lords, then, give us leave.

Chester. What means this rage, Fitzwater ?

Queen. Lay hands upon the Bedlam, trait'rous
wretch !

John. Nay, hale him hence ! and hear you, old
Fitzwater :

See that you stay not five days in the realm,
For if you do, you die remediless.

Fitzwater. Speak, lords : do you confirm what he
hath said ?

All. He is our prince, and he must be obey'd.

Fitzwater. Hearken, Earl John : but one word will I
say.

* To lie at the ward was, and is still, a term in fencing : thus Fairfax, translating the fight between Tancred and Argantes in the 6th book of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, says,

"Close at his surest ward, each champion lieth."

Galfrey of Bulloigne, 1600.

John. I will not hear thee ; neither will I stay.
Thou know'st thy time. [Exit John.

Fitzwater. Will not your highness hear?

Queen. No: thy Matilda robb'd me of my dear.
[Exit Queen.

Fitzwater. I aided thee in battle, Salisbury.

Salisbury. Prince John is mov'd ; I dare not stay
with thee. [Exit Salisbury.*

Fitzwater. 'Gainst thee and Ely, Chester, was I foe,
And dost thou stay to aggravate my woe ?

Chester. No, good Fitzwater ; Chester doth lament
Thy wrong, thy sudden banishment.

Whence grew the quarrel 'twixt the prince and thee ?

Fitzwater. Chester, the devil tempted old Fitzwater,
To be a pandar to his only daughter ;
And my great heart, impatient, forc'd my hand,
In my true honor's right to challenge him.
Alas, the while ! wrong will not be reprov'd.

Chester. Farewell, Fitzwater : wheresoe'er thou be,
By letters, I beseech thee, send to me. . [Exit Chester.

Fitzwater. Chester, I will, I will.
Heavens turn to good, this woe, this wrong, this ill.
[Exit.

SCENE II.

*Enter SCATHLOCK and SCARLET; winding their horns
at several doors. To them enter ROBIN HOOD, MA-
TILDA, all in green, SCATHLOCK'S MOTHER, MUCH,
LITTLE JOHN : all the men with bows and arrows.*

Robin Hood. Widow, I wish thee homeward now to
wend,
Lest Warman's malice work thee any wrong.

Widow. Master, I will ; and mickle good attend
On thee, thy love, and all these yeomen strong.

Matilda. Forget not, widow, what you promis'd me.

Much. Oh, I, mistress ; for God's sake let's have
Jenny.

* The exit of Salisbury is not marked, but it of course takes place here.

Widow. You shall have Jenny sent you with all speed.

Sons farewell, and by your mother's reed,

Love well your master : blessing ever fall

On him, your mistress, and these yeomen tall. [*Exit.*

Much. God be with you mother : have much mind I pray on Much your son, and your daughter Jenny.

Robert. Wind once more, jolly hunstmen, all your horns ;

Whose shrill sound, with the echoing wood's assist,

Shall ring a sad knell for the fearful deer,

Before our feather'd shafts, death's winged darts,

Bring sudden summons for their fatal ends.

Scarlet. It's full seven year since we were outlaw'd first,

And wealthy Sherwood was our heritage :

For all those years we reigned uncontroll'd,

From Barnsdale shrogs, to Nottingham's red cliffs ;

At Blithe and Tickhill were we welcome guests.

Good George-a-Greene at Bradford was our friend,

And wanton Wakefield's Pinner* lov'd us well.

At Barnsley dwells a Potter tough and strong,

That never brook'd we brethren should have wrong.

The nuns of Farnsfield, (pretty nuns they be)

Gave napkins, shirts, and bands to him and me.

Bateman of Kendall, gave us Kendall green,

And Sharpe of Leeds, sharp arrows for us made :

At Rotheram dwelt our bowyer, God him bliss ;

Jackson he hight, his bows did never miss.

This for our good ; our scathe let Scathlock tell,

In merry Mansfield how it once befel.

* It seems singular that the author of this play should confound two such persons as the Shoemaker of Bradford, who made all comers "vail their staves," and George-a-Greene the Pinner of Wakefield, yet such is the case in the text. The exploits of both are celebrated in the play of *The Pinner of Wakefield* (D. O. P. vol. III.) which seems to have been popular. Nevertheless Henslowe in his MSS. speaks of George-a-Greene as one dramatic piece, and of *The Pinner of Wakefield* as another, as if they were two distinct heroes. See Malone's Shakespeare by Boswell III. 300. Munday also makes Scathlock and Scarlet two separate persons.

Scathlock. In merry Mansfield, on a wrestling day,
Prizes there were, and yeomen came to play;
My brother Scarlet and myself were twain.
Many resisted, but it was in vain,
For of them all we won the mastery,
And the gilt wreaths were given to him and me.
There by Sir Doncaster of Hothersfield
We were bewray'd, beset, and forc'd to yield,
And so borne bound, from thence to Nottingham,
Where we lay doom'd to death, till Warman came.

Robert. Of that enough. What cheer, my dearest love?

Much. Oh, good cheer anon, sir; she shall have venison her bellyful.

Matilda. Matilda is as joyful of thy good,
As joy can make her: how fares Robin Hood?

Robin. Well my Matilda, and if thou agree,
Nothing but mirth shall wait on thee and me.

Matilda. Oh God, how full of perfect mirth were I
To see thy grief turn'd to true jollity!

Robin. Give me thy hand; now God's curse on
me light,

If I forsake not grief, in grief's despite.

Much, make a cry, and yeomen stand ye round:

I charge ye never more let woeful sound

Be heard among ye; but whatever fall,

Laugh grief to scorn, and so make sorrows small.

Much, make a cry, and loudly: Little John.—

Much. Oh God, Oh God! help, help, help! I am
undone, I am undone!

Little John. Why how now Much? peace, peace,
you roaring slave.

Much. My master bid me cry and I will cry till he
bid me leave. Help, help, help! I, marry will I.

Robin. Peace, Much. Read on the articles good
John.

Little John. First, no man must presume to call
our master

By name of Earl, Lord, Baron, Knight, or Squire;

But simply by the name of Robin Hood.

Robin. Say, yeomen, to this order will ye yield?

All. We yield to serve our master Robin Hood.

Little John. Next, 'tis agreed (if thereto she agree)
That fair Matilda henceforth change her name,
And while it is the chance of Robin Hood
To live in Sherwood a poor outlaw's life,
She by maid Marian's name be only call'd.

Matilda. I am contented; read on Little John:
Henceforth let me be nam'd Maid Marian.

Little John. Thirdly, no yeoman, following Robin
Hood

In Sherwood, shall use widow, wife, or maid;
But by true labour lustful thoughts expel.

Robin. How like ye this?

All. Master, we like it well.

Much. But I cry no to it. What shall I do with
Jenny then?

Scarlet. Peace, Much: go forward with the orders,
fellow John.

Little John. Fourthly, no passenger with whom ye
meet,

Shall ye let pass till he with Robin feast;

Except a post, a carrier, or such folk

As use with food to serve the market towns.

All. An order which we gladly will observe.

Little John. Fifthly, you never shall the poor man
wrong,

Nor spare a priest, a usurer, or a clerk.

Much. Nor a fair wench, meet we her in the dark.

Little John. Lastly, you shall defend with all your
power

Maids, widows, orphans, and distressed men.

All. All these we vow to keep as we are men.

Robin. Then wend ye to the Greenwood merrily,
And let the light roes bootless from ye run.

Marian and I, as sovereigns of your toils,

Will wait, within our bower, your bent bows spoils.

Much. I'll among them master.

[*Exeunt winding their horns.*]

Robin. Marian, thou seest though courtly pleasures
want,

Yet country sport in Sherwood is not scant :
For the soul-ravishing delicious sound
Of instrumental music, we have found
The winged quiristers, with divers notes
Sent from their quaint recording* pretty throats,
On every branch that compasseth our bower,
Without command contenting us each hour.
For arras hangings, and rich tapestry,
We have sweet nature's best embroidery.
For thy steel glass, wherein thou wont'st to look,
Thy crystal eyes gaze in a crystal brook.
At court a flower or two did deck thy head,
Now with whole garlands is it circled.
For what in wealth we want, we have in flowers,
And what we lose in halls, we find in bowers.

Marian. Marian hath all, sweet Robert, having th
And guesses thee as rich in having me.

Robin. I am indeed ;
For having thee, what comfort can I need ?

Marian. Go in, go in.
To part such true love, Robin, it were sin. [Exit

Enter PRIOR, SIR DONCASTER, FRIAR TUCK.

Prior. To take his body, by the blessed rood,
'Twould do me more than any other good.

Doncaster. Oh, 'tis an unthrift, still the Chur
men's foe ;

An ill end will betide him, that I know.
'Twas he that urged the king to 'sess the clergy
When to the holy land he took his journey ;
And he it is that rescued those two thieves,
Scarlet and Scathlock, that so many grieves

* To *record*, as applied to birds, is synonymous to the ve
sing : thus in *The Spanish Tragedy*, Act ii.

"Hark, madam, how the *birds record* by night."
Shakespeare so employs the word in his *Two Gentlemen of V*
A. v. Sc. 4. and in the notes upon the passage more than suff
instances are collected.

To churchmen did : and now, they say,
He keeps in Sherwood, and himself doth play
The lawless reaver :* hear you, my lord Prior,
He must be taken, or it will be wrong.

Tuck. I, I, soon said ;
But ere he be, many will lie dead,
Except it be by sleight.

Doncaster. I, there, there, Friar.

Tuck. Give me my lord, your execution.—
The widow Scarlet's daughter, lovely Jenny,
Loves, and is belov'd of Much, the miller's son,
If I can get the girl to go with me,
Disguis'd in habit like a pedlar's mort,†
I'll serve this execution, on my life,
And single out a time alone to take
Robin, that often careless walks alone.
Why, answer not ; remember what I said :
Yonder, I see, comes Jenny, that fair maid.
If we agree, then back me soon with aid.

Enter JENNY with a fardel.

Prior. Tuck, if thou do it——

Doncaster. Pray you do not talk :
As we were strangers let us careless walk.

Jenny. Now to the green wood wend I, God me
speed.

Tuck. Amen, fair maid, and send thee, in thy need,
Much, that is born to do thee much good deeds.

Jenny. Are you there Friar ? nay then i'faith we
have it.

Tuck. What wench ? my love ?

Jenny. I, gi't me when I crave it.

Tuck. Unask'd I offer ; prithee, sweet girl, take it.

Jenny. Gifts stink with proffer : foh ! Friar, I for-
sake it.

* The 4to. reads " the lawless *Reuer*," but it is a misprint for *Rever* or *Reaver*.

† *Mort* was the old cant word for a *wench*, and was synonymous with *dory*, which is still sometimes in use. An explanation, for such as require it, may be found in Dekkar's *Bellman of London* sig. N.

Tuck. I will be kind.

Jenny. Will not your kindness kill her?

Tuck. With love?

Jenny. You cog.

Tuck. Tut, girl, I am no miller :

Hear in your ear :

Doncaster. The Friar courts her. [*Standing behind.*

Prior. Tush, let them alone ;

He is our Lady's Chaplain, but serves Joan :

Doncaster. Then, from the Friar's fault, perchance,
it may be

The proverb grew, Joan's taken for my lady.

Prior. Peace, good Sir Doncaster, list to the end.

Jenny. But mean ye faith and troth ? shall I go
wi' ye ?

Tuck. Upon my faith, I do intend good faith.

Jenny. And shall I have the pins and laces too,
If I bear a pedlar's pack with you ?

Tuck. As I am holy Friar, Jenny thou shalt.

Jenny. Well, there's my hand ; see, Friar, you do
not halt.

Tuck. Go but before into the miry mead,
And keep the path that doth to Farnsfield lead ;
I'll into Southwell and buy all the knacks,
That shall fit both of us for Pedlar's packs.

Jenny. Who be they two that yonder walk, I
pray ?

Tuck. Jenny, I know not : be they what they may,
Scare not for them ; prithee do not stay,
But make some speed, that we were gone away.

Jenny. Well Friar, I trust you that we go to Sher-
wood.

Tuck. I, by my beads, and unto Robin Hood.

Jenny. Make speed, good Friar. [*Exit Jenny.*

Tuck. Jenny, do not fear.

Lord Prior, now you hear,

As much as I. Get me two pedlar's packs,
Points, laces, looking glasses, pins and knacks ;
And let Sir Doncaster with some wight lads
Follow us close, and ere these forty hours,

Upon my life, Earl Robert shall be ours.

Prior. Thou shalt have any thing, my dearest Friar;

And in amends I'll make thee my Sub-prior.

Come, good Sir Doncaster, and if we thrive,

We'll frolic with the nuns of Leeds belive.* [*Exeunt.*

Enter FITZWATER like an old man.

Fitzwater. Well did he write, and mickle did he know,

That said this world's felicity was woe,

Which greatest states can hardly undergo.

Whilom Fitzwater in fair England's court

Possess'd felicity and happy state,

And in his hall blithe fortune kept her sport,

Which glee one hour of woe did ruin.

Fitzwater once had castles, towns, and towers,

Fair gardens, orchards, and delightful bowers;

But now nor garden, orchard, town, nor tower,

Hath poor Fitzwater left within his power.

Only wide walks are left me in the world,

Which these stiff limbs will hardly let me tread;

And, when I sleep, heaven's glorious canopy

Me and my mossy couch doth overspread.

Of this injurious John cannot bereave me;

The air and earth he (while I live) must leave me;

But from the English air and earth, poor man,

His tyranny hath, ruthless, thee exiled.

Yet ere I leave it, I'll do what I can

To see Matilda, my fair luckless child.

[*Curtains open: Robin Hood sleeps on a green bank, and Marian strewing flowers on him.*

And in good time see where my comfort stands,

* Mr. Todd in his Dictionary thus explains the word *belive*: "Speedily, quickly; it is still common in Westmoreland for *presently*, which sense, implying a little delay, like our expression of *by and by*, was formerly the general acceptance of the word." Spenser uses it not unfrequently,

"Perdie, Sir Knight," said then th'enchanted *b'live*,

"That shall I shortly purchase to your hond."

F. Q. Book II. c. 3. st. 18.

And by her lies dejected Huntington.
Look how my flower holds flowers in her hands,
And flings those sweets upon my sleeping son.
I'll close mine eyes as if I wanted sight,
That I may see the end of their delight.

[*Goes knocking with his staff.*]

Marian. What aged man art thou? or by what
chance

Cam'st thou thus far into the wayless wood?

Fitzwater. Widow, or wife, or maiden if thou be,
Lend me thy hand; thou seest I cannot see :
Blessing betide thee, little feel'st thou want;
With me, good child, food is both hard and scant.
These smooth even veins assure me he is kind,
Whate'er he be, my girl, that thee doth find.
I, poor and old, am reft of all earth's good,
And desperately am crept into this wood
To seek the poor man's patron, Robin Hood.

Marian. And thou art welcome: welcome, aged
man,

I, ten times welcome to Maid Marian.

Sit down, old father, sit, and call me daughter.

Oh God, how like he looks to old Fitzwater! [*Runs in.*]

Fitzwater. Is my Matilda call'd Maid Marian?
I wonder why her name is changed thus.

[*Marian brings wine, meat.*]

Marian. Here's wine to cheer thy heart; drink
aged man :

There's ven'son and a knife, here's manchet* fine :

Drink good old man, I pray you, drink more wine.

My Robin stirs; I must sing him asleep.

Robin. Nay, you have wak'd me Marian with your
talk.

What man is that is come within our walk?

Marian. An aged man, a silly sightless man,
Near pin'd with hunger: see how fast he eats.

* *Manchet* is fine white bread: *panis candidior et purior*. See Note 29 to *The Honest Whore*, Part I. D. O. P. iii. 250, where *Ju-nius's Etymologicon* is quoted.

Robin. Much good may't do him : never is good
meat

Ill spent on such a stomach. Father, proface ;*
To Robin Hood thou art a welcome man.

Fitzwater. I thank you, master.. Are you Robin
Hood?

Robin. Father, I am.

Fitzwater. God give your soul much good,
For this good meat Maid Marian hath given me.
But hear me, master, can you tell me news,
Where fair Matilda is, Fitzwater's daughter?

Robin. Why, here she is ; this Marian is she.

Fitzwater. Why did she change her name ?

Robin. What's that to thee ?

Fitzwater. Yes, I could weep for grief that it is so,
But that my tears are all dried up with woe.

Robin. Why, she is called Maid Marian, honest
friend,

Because she lives a spotless maiden life ;
And shall, till Robin's outlaw life have end,
That he may lawfully take her to wife ;
Which, if king Richard come, will not be long,
For in his hand is power to right our wrong.

Fitzwater. If it be thus, I joy in her name's change :
So pure love in these times is very strange.

Marian. Robin, I think it is my aged father.

Robin. Tell me, old man, tell me, in courtesy,
Are you no other than you seem to be ?

Fitzwater. I am a wretched aged man, you see,
If you will do me aught for charity :
Further than this, sweet, do not question me.

Robin. You shall have your desire. But what be
these ?

* It seems agreed by the commentators on the word *proface*, (which Shakespeare uses in Henry IV. Part II. A. V. scene 3.) that it means in fact what Robin Hood has already said, " Much good may it do you." It is disputed whether it be derived from the French or the Italian ; Mr. Todd gives *prouface* as the etymology, and Malone *pro vi faccia*, but in fact they are one and the same. It occurs in *The Widow's Tears*, A. IV. scene 1. where Ero is eating and drinking in the tomb.

*Enter FRIAR TUCK, and JENNY, like pedlars.
singing.*

What lack ye? what lack ye?
What is it you will buy?
Any points, pins, or laces,
Any laces, points, or pins?
Fine gloves, fine glasses,
Any busks or masks?
Or any other pretty things?
Come, cheap for love, or buy for money.
Any coney, coney skins?
For laces, points, or pins?
Fair maids come chuse or buy.
I have pretty poking sticks,*
And many other tricks,
Come, choose for love or buy for money.

Robin. Pedlar, I prithee set thy pack down here :
Marian shall buy if thou be not too dear.

Tuck. Jenny, unto thy mistress shew thy pack.
Master, for you I have a pretty knack,
From far I brought, please you see to the same.

[Exeunt Robin Hood, Marian, and Fitzwater.]

*Enter SIR DONCASTER, and others, weaponed.**

Friar. Sir Doncaster, are not we pedlar-like?

Doncaster. Yes, passing fit; and yonder is the
bower.

I doubt not we shall have him in our power.

Friar. You and your company were best stand close.

Doncaster. What shall the watchword be to bring
us forth?

Friar. Take it, I pray, though it be much more worth :
When I speak that aloud, be sure I serve
The execution presently on him.

* The 4to. terms them "*poting sticks*," and so sometimes they were called, instead of "*poking sticks*." They were used to plait and set ruffs, and are sufficiently described in D. O. P. vol. iii. p. 447. (note.)

† The old copy here repeats, in part, the preceding stage direction, viz. "*Enter Friar, like a Pedler, and Jenny*," which must be an error, as they are already on the stage: in fact only Sir Doncaster and his armed followers enter. The *exit* of Robin Hood, with Marian and Fitzwater, is not noticed.

Doncaster. Friar, look to 't.

Friar. Now, Jenny, to your song.

[*Sings.*

Enter MARIAN, ROBIN.

Marian. Pedlar, what pretty toys have you to sell?

Friar. Jenny, unto our mistress shew your ware.

Marian. Come in, good woman.

[*Exeunt.*

Friar. Master, look here,

And God give ear,

So mote I thie,*

To her and me,

If ever we,

Robin to thee,

That art so free,

Mean treachery.

Robin. On, pedlar, to thy pack ;
If thou love me, my love thou shalt not lack.

Friar. Master, in brief,

There is a thief,

That seeks your grief,

God send relief,

To you in need ;

For a foul deed,

If not with speed

You take good heed,

There is decreed.

In yonder brake

There lies a snake,

That means to take,

Out of this wood,

The yeoman good,

Call'd Robin Hood.

Robin. Pedlar, I prithee be more plain.
What brake ? what snake ? what trap ? what train ?

Friar. Robin, I am a holy friar,

Sent by the prior,

Who did me hire,

For to conspire

Thy endless woe,

And overthrow :

* i. e. *thrive*. See D. O. P. xii. 320 (note).

But thou shalt know,
 I am the man
 Whom little John,
 From Nottingham,
 Desir'd to be
 A clerk to thee ;
 For he to me,
 Said thou wert free,
 And I did see
 Thy honesty,
 From gallow-tree,
 When thou didst free,
 Scathlock and Scarlet certainly.*

Robin. Why then it seems that thou art Friar Tuck.

Friar. Master, I am.

Robin. I pray thee, friar, say,
 What treachery is meant to me this day?

Friar. First wind your horn ; then draw your sword.
[Robin winds his horn.]

For I have given a friar's word,
 To take your body prisoner,
 And yield you to Sir Doncaster,
 The envious priest of Hothersfield,
 Whose power your bushy wood doth shield ;
 But I will die ere you shall yield.

Enter LITTLE JOHN, &c.

And sith your yeomen do appear,
 I'll give the watchword without fear.
 Take it, I pray thee, though it be more worth.

Rush in SIR DONCASTER *with his crew.*

Doncaster. Smite down ! lay hold on outlaw'd
 Huntington !

Little John. Soft, hot spurr'd priest, 'tis not so quickly done.

Doncaster. Now, out alas ! the friar and the maid,
 Have to false thieves Sir Doncaster betray'd.

[Exeunt omnes.†]

* The rhyme is made out by reading *certainly*, but the old copy has it *certain*.

† This stage direction, like many others, is not marked.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter JOHN, *crowned*, QUEEN ELINOR, CHESTER, SALISBURY, LORD PRIOR. *Sit down all: Warman stands.*

John. As God's vicegerent John ascends this throne,
His head impal'd with England's diadem,*
And in his hand the awful rod of rule,
Giving the humble place of excellence,
And to the low earth casting down the proud.

Queen. Such upright rule is in each realm allow'd.

John. Chester, you once were Ely's open friend,
And yet are doubtful whether he deserve
A public trial for his private wrongs.

Chester. I still am doubtful, whether it be fit
To punish private faults with public shame
In such a person as Lord Ely is.

Prior. Yes, honourable Chester, more it fits
To make apparent sins of mighty men,
And on their persons sharply to correct
A little fault, a very small defect,
Than on the poor to practise chastisement :
For if a poor man die, or suffer shame,
Only the poor and vile respect the same ;
But if the mighty fall, fear then besets
The proud heart of the mighty ones, his mates :
They think the world is garnished with nets,
And traps ordained to entrap their states ;
Which fear in them begets a fear of ill,
And makes them good, contrary to their will.

John. Your lordship hath said right. Lord Salisbury,
Is not your mind as ours concerning Ely?

Salisbury. I judge him worthy of reproof and shame.

John. Warman, bring forth your prisoner, Ely, the Chancellor ;

† So in Henry VI. Pt. 3. Act 3. Sc. 3. " Did I *impale* him with the regal crown ?" This use of the word is common.

And with him bring the seal that he detains.

Warman, why goest thou not?

Warman. Be good to me, my lord.

John. What hast thou done?

Warman. Speak for me, my Lord Prior :
All my good lords entreat his grace for me.

Ely, my lord—

John. Why, where is Ely, Warman?

Warman. Fled to-day : this misty morning he is
fled away.

John. Oh, Judas ! whom nor friend, nor foe may
trust,

Think'st thou with tears and plaints to answer this?

Do I not know thy heart? do I not know,

That bribes have purchas'd Ely this escape?

Never make antic faces, never bend

With feigned humbless thy still crouching knee,

But with fix'd eyes unto thy doom attend.

Villain ! I'll plague thee for abusing me.

Go hence ; and henceforth never set thy foot

In house or field thou didst this day possess.

Mark what I say : advise thee to look to 't,

Or else, be sure, thou diest remediless.

Nor from those houses see that thou receive

So much as shall sustain thee for an hour,

But as thou art, go where thou canst ; get friends,

And he that feeds thee be mine enemy.

Warman. Oh, my good lord !

John. Thou thy good lord betrayd'st,
And all the world for money thou wilt sell.

Warman. What says the queen?

Queen. Why thus I say :

Betray thy master, thou wilt all betray.

Warman. My Lords of Chester and of Salisbury !

Both. Speak not to us : all traitors we defy.

Warman. Good my Lord Prior !

Prior. Alas ! what can I do ?

Warman. Then I defy the world ! yet I desire
Your grace would read this supplication.

[*John reads.*

John. I thought as much : but, Warman, dost thou think

There is one moving line to mercy here ?
I tell thee no ; therefore away, away !
A shameful death follows thy longer stay.

War. Oh, poor, poor man !
Of miserable, miserablest wretch I am. *Exit.*

John. Confusion be thy guide ! a baser slave
Earth cannot bear : plagues follow him I crave.
~~Can~~ any tell me if my lord of York
Be able to sit up ?

Queen. The Archbishop's Grace :
Was reasonable well even now, good son.

Salisbury. And he desir'd me that I should desire
Your majesty to send unto his grace,
If any matter did import his presence.

John. We will ourselves step in and visit him.
Mother, and my good lords, will you attend us ?

Prior. I gladly will attend your majesty.

John. Now good lord help us ! When I said good
lords,
I meant not you lord Prior : lord I know you are,
But good, God knows, you never mean to be.

[*Exeunt John, Queen, Chester, Salisbury.*]

Prior. John is incens'd ; and very much I doubt
That villain Warman hath accused me,
About the 'scape, of Ely. Well, suppose he have,
What's that to me ? I am a clergyman,
And all his power, if he all extend,
Cannot prevail against my holy order.
But the Archbishop's Grace is now his friend,
And may, perchance, attempt to do me ill.

Enter a SERVING-MAN.

What news with you sir ?

Serving-man. Even heavy news my lord : for the
light fire *
Falling, in manner of a fire-drake †

* So the old copy ; but ought we not rather to read " for the lightning's fire."

† See Mr. Stevens' note on Henry VIII.. A 5. sc. 3.

Upon a barn of yours, hath burnt six barns,
And not a strike of corn reserv'd from dust.
No hand could save it, yet ten thousand hands
Labour'd their best, though none for love of you;
For every tongue with bitter cursing bann'd
Your lordship, as the viper of the land.

Prior. What meant the villains?

Serving-man. Thus and thus they cried :—
Upon this churl, this hoarder up of corn,
This spoiler of the Earl of Huntington,
This lust-defiled, merciless, false Prior,
Heaven raineth vengeance down in shape of fire.
Old wives that scarce could with their crutches creep,
And little babes, that newly learn'd to speak,
Men masterless, that thorough want did weep,
All in one voice, with a confused cry,
In execrations bann'd you bitterly :
Plague follow plague, they cry, he hath undone
The good lord Robert, Earl of Huntington.
And then—

*Prior.** What then, thou villain? Get thee from
my sight!
They that wish plagues, plagues will upon them light.

Enter another SERVANT.

Prior. What are your tidings?

Servant. The convent of St. Mary's are agreed,
And have elected in your lordship's place,
Old father Jerome, who is stall'd lord Prior
By the new Archbishop.

Prior. Of York, thou mean'st?
A vengeance on him! he is my hopes' foe.

Enter a HERALD.

Herald. Gilbert de Hood, late Prior of Saint Mary's,
Our sovereign John commandeth thee by me,
That presently thou leave this blessed land,
Defiled with the burthen of thy sin.
All thy goods temporal and spiritual,
(With free consent of Hubert lord York,

* These two lines clearly belong to the Prior, though the old copy omits his name before them.

Primate of England and thy ordinary)
He hath suspended, and vowed by heaven
To hang thee up, if thou depart not hence,
Without delaying or more question.
And that he hath good reason for the same,
He sends this writing 'firm'd with Warman's hand,
And comes himself; whose presence if thou stay,
I fear this sun will see thy dying day.

Prior. Oh, Warman hath betray'd me! woe is me!

Enter JOHN, QUEEN, CHESTER, SALISBURY.

John. Hence with that Prior! sirrah, do not speak:
My eyes are full of wrath, my heart of wreak.*
Let Leicester come: his haught heart, I am sure,
Will check the kingly course we undertake.

[Exeunt cum Prior.]

Enter LEICESTER, drum and ancient.

John. Welcome from war, thrice noble Earl of
Leicester,

Unto our court: welcome, most valiant earl.

Leicester. Your court in England, and king Richard
gone!

A king in England, and the king from home!
This sight and salutations are so strange,
That what I should I know not how to speak.

John. What would you say? speak boldly, we en-
treat.

Leicester. It is not fear, but wonder bars my speech.
I muse to see a mother and a Queen,
Two peers, so great as Salisbury and Chester,
Sit and support proud usurpation,
And see King Richard's crown worn by Earl John,

Queen. He sits as viceroy and a substitute.

Chester. He must and shall resign when Richard
comes.

Salisbury. Chester, he will, without your must and
shall.

Leicester. Whether he will or no, he shall resign.

* *Wreak* is vengeance. A number of instances are collected in note
44 to *Tancred and Gismunda*, D. O. P. vol. II. 225.

John. You know your own will, Leicester, but not mine.

Leicester. Tell me among ye, where is reverend Ely,
Left by our dread king, as his deputy?

John. Banish'd he is, as proud usurpers should.

Leicester. Pride then, belike, was enemy to pride:
Ambition in yourself his state envied.

Where is Fitzwater, that old honour'd lord?

John. Dishonour'd and exil'd, as Ely is.

Leicester. Exil'd he may be, but dishonour'd never!
He was a fearless souldier, and a virtuous scholar.
But where is Huntington, that noble youth?

Chester. Undone by riot.

Leicester. Ah, the greater ruth.

John. Leicester, you question more than doth become you.

On to the purpose, why you come to us.

Leicester. I come to Ely, and to all the state,
Sent by the king, who three times sent before,
To have his ransom brought to Austria:
And if you be elected deputy,
Do as you ought, and send the ransom money.

John. Leicester, you see, I am no deputy;
And Richard's ransom if you do require,
Thus we make answer:—Richard is a king,
In Cyprus, Acon, Acres, and rich Palestine.
To get those kingdoms England lent him men,
And many a million of her substance spent,
The very entrails of her womb were rent:
No plough but paid a share, no needy hand,
But from his poor estate of penury,
Unto his voyage offer'd more than mites,
And more, poor souls, than they had might to spare.
Yet were they joyful; for still flying news,
And lying I perceive them now to be,
Came of King Richard's glorious victories,
His conquest of the Soldans, and such tales
As blew them up with hope, when he return'd,
He would have scatter'd gold about the streets.

Leicester. Do princes fight for gold? Oh, leaden
thought!

Your father knew, that honour was the aim

Kings level at. By sweet Saint John I swear,
You urge me so, that I cannot forbear.
What do you tell of money lent the king,
When first he went into this holy war,
As if he had extorted from the poor,
When you, the Queen, and all that hear me speak,
Know with what zeal the people gave their goods.
Old wives took silver buckles from their belts;
Young maids the gilt pins that tuck'd up their trains;
Children their pretty whistles from their necks,
And every man what he did most esteem,
Crying to soldiers, "Wear these gifts of ours."
This proves that Richard had no need to wrong,
Or force the people, that with willing hearts
Gave more than was desir'd. And where you say,
You guess Richard's victories but lies,
I swear he won rich Cyprus with his sword;
And thence, more glorious than the guide of Greece,
That brought so huge a fleet to Tenedos,
He sail'd along the Mediterran sea,
Where on a sunbright morning he did meet
The warlike Soldan's* well prepared fleet.
Oh, still, methinks, I see King Richard stand
In his gilt armour, stain'd with Pagan's blood,
Upon a galley's prow, like war's fierce god,
And on his crest, a crucifix of gold!
Oh, that day's honour can be never told!
Six times six several brigantines he boarded,
And in the greedy waves flung wounded Turks;
And three times thrice the winged galley's banks
(Wherein the Soldan's son was admiral)
In his own person royal Richard smooth'd,
And left no heathen hand to be upheav'd
Against the Christian soldiers.

John. Leicester, so:

Did he all this?

Leicester. I, by God he did,
And more than this: nay, jest at it, John;
I swear he did, by Leicester's faith he did,

* In the old copy *soldier's*.

— And made the green sea red with Pagan blood,
Leading to Joppa glorious victory,
And following fear, that fled unto the foe.

John. All this he did ! perchance all this was so.

Leicester. Holy God, help me ! soldiers come away !
This carpet knight* sits carping at our scars,
And jests at those most glorious well fought wars,

John. Leicester, you are too hot : stay ; go not yet.
Methinks, if Richard won those victories,
The wealthy kingdoms he hath conquered
May, better than poor England, pay his ransom.
He left this realm, as a young orphan maid,
To Ely, the step-father of this state,
That stripp'd the virgin to her very skin ;
And, Leicester, had not John more careful been
Than Richard,

At this hour England had not England been.
Therefore, good warlike lord, take this in brief ;
We wish king Richard well, but can send no relief.

Leicester. Oh, let not my heart break with inward
grief !

John. Yes, let it Leicester : it is not amiss,
That twenty such hearts break as your heart is.

Leicester. Are you a mother ? were you England's
Queen ?

Were Henry, Richard, Geoffery, your sons ?
All sons, but Richard, sun of all those sons !
And can you let this little meteor,
This *ignis fatuus*, this same wandering fire,
This goblin of the night, this brand, this spark,
Seem through a lanthorn greater than he is ?
By heaven, you do not well, by earth you do not !
Chester nor you, nor you, Earl Salisbury ;
Ye do not, no, ye do not what ye should.

* See Mr. Gifford's note (6) to *The Maid of Honour*, Massinger's Works, III. 47, for an explanation of the origin and use of this expression of contempt.—See also note 49 to *The Honest Whore*, D. O. P. III. 273, and Malone's remarks upon the passage in *Twelfth Night*, A. III. sc. 4.—“ He is a knight dubb'd with an unhatch'd rapier and on carpet consideration.”

Queen. Were this bear loose, how he would tear
our maws.

Chester. Pale death and vengeance dwell within his
jaws.

Salisbury. But we can muzzle him, and bind his paws :
If King John say we shall, we will indeed.

John. Do if you can.

Leicester. It's well thou hast some fear.
No, curs ! ye have no teeth to bait this bear* :
I will not bid mine ensign-bearer wave
My tattered colours in this worthless air,
Which your vile breaths vilely contaminate.
Bear, thou hast been my ancient-bearer long,
And borne up Leicester's bear in foreign lands ;
Yet now resign these colours to my hands,
For I am full of grief, and full of rage.
John, look upon me : thus did Richard take
The coward Austria's colours in his hand,
And thus he cast them under Acon walls,
And thus he trod them underneath his feet.
Rich colours, how I wrong ye by this wrong !
But I will right ye. Bear, take them again,
And keep them ever, ever them maintain :
We shall have use for them I hope, ere long.

John. Dar'st thou attempt thus proudly in our sight ?

Leicester. What is't a subject dares, that I dare not ?

Salisbury. Dare subjects dare, their sovereign be-
ing by ?

Leicester. Oh God, that my true sovereign were
nigh !

Queen. Leicester, he is.

Leicester. Madam, by God, you lie.

Chester. Unmanner'd man.

Leicester. A plague of reverence,
Where no regard is had of excellence. [Sound drum.

* On the standard by which Leicester was attended on his entrance no doubt the crest of that family, viz. a bear and ragged staff, was represented. To this the queen refers when she exclaims,

"Were this bear loose, how he would tear our maws."

It appears also that the name of Leicester's *ancient-bearer* was Bear, whom he addresses.

But you will quite* me now: I hear your drums :
Your principality hath stirr'd up men,
And now you think to muzzle up this bear.
Still they come nearer, but are not the near.

John. What drums are these ?

Salisbury. I think, some friends of yours
Prepare a power to resist this wrong.

Leicester. Let them prepare, for Leicester is prepar'd,
And thus he wooes his willing men to fight.
Soldiers,† ye see King Richard's open wrong ;
Richard that led ye to the glorious East,
And made ye tread upon the blessed land,
Where he, that brought all Christians blessedness,
Was born, lived, wrought his miracles, and died,
From death arose, and then to heaven ascended ;
Whose true religious faith ye have defended.
Ye fought, and Richard taught ye how to fight
Against profane men, following Mahomet ;
But, if ye note, they did their kings their right :
These, more than heathen sacrilegious men,
Professing Christ, banish Christ's champion hence,
Their lawful lord, their home-born sovereign,
With petty quarrels, and with slight pretence.

Enter RICHMOND, Soldiers.

Oh, let me be as short as time is short,
For the arm'd foe is now within our sight.
Remember how 'gainst ten, one man did fight,
So hundreds against thousands, have borne head !
You are the men that ever conquered :
If multitudes oppress ye that ye die,
Let's sell our lives, and leave them valiantly.

* *Quite* is frequently used for *requite* : as in Massinger's *Old Law*, A ii. sc. 2.

In troth Eugenia, I have cause to weep too ;
But when I visit, I come comfortably,
And look to be so *quited*.

† Although the old copy mentions no more at the beginning of this interview than " Enter Leicester, drum and ancient," yet according to this speech he must either have been more *numerously* attended, or some of his followers came upon the stage during his dispute, with the king and queen.

Courage! upon them! till we cannot stand:

John. Richmond is yonder.

Queen. I; and son, I think,
The king is not far off.

Chester. Now heaven forefend.

Leicester. Why smite ye not, but stand thus cowardly?

Richmond. If Richmond hurt good Leicester, let him die.

Leicester. Richmond! oh, pardon mine offending eye,
That took thee for a foe: welcome dear friend!
Where is my sovereign Richard? Thou and he
Were both in Austria. Richmond, comfort me,
And tell me where he is, and how he fares.
Oh, for his ransom, many thousand cares
Have me afflicted.

Richmond. Leicester, he is come to London,
And will himself to faithless Austria,
Like a true king, his promis'd ransom bear.

Leicester. At London, say'st thou Richmond? is he there?

Farewell: I will not stay to tell my wrongs,
To these pale-colour'd heartless, guilty lords.
Richmond, you shall go with me: do not stay,
And I will tell you wonders by the way.

Richmond. The king did doubt you had some injury,
And therefore sent this power to rescue ye.

Leicester. I thank his grace. Madam, adieu, adieu.
I'll to your son, and leave your shade with you. [*Exeunt.*

John. Hark how he mocks me, calling me your shade.
Chester and Salisbury, shall we gather power,
And keep what we have got?

Chester. And in an hour,
Be taken, judg'd, and 'headed with disgrace.
Salisbury, what say you?

Salisbury. My lord, I bid your excellence adieu.
I to King Richard will submit my knee:
I have good hope his grace will pardon me.

Chester. And, Salisbury, I'll go along with thee.
Farewell, queen mother; fare you well lord John.

John. Mother, stay you.

Queen. Not I, son, by Saint Anne.

John. Will you not stay?

Queen. Go with me: I will do the best I may
To beg my son's forgiveness of my son. [Exit.]

John. Go by yourself. By heaven, 'twas 'long of you,
I rose to fall so soon. Leicester and Richmond's crew,
They come to take me: now too late I rue
My proud attempt. Like falling Phaeton,
I perish from my guiding of the sun.

*Enter again LEICESTER and RICHMOND.**

Leicester. I will go back, i'faith, once more and see
Whether this mock king, and the mother Queen—
And who?—Here's neither Queen nor lord!
What, king of crickets, is there none but you?
Come off, off:

This crown, this sceptre are King Richard's right:
Bear thou them Richmond, thou art his true knight.
You would not send his ransom, gentle John;
He's come to fetch it now. Come, wily fox,
Now you are stripp'd out of the lion's case,
What, dare you look the lion in the face?
The English lion, that in Austria
With his strong hand pull'd out a lion's heart.
Good Richmond tell it me; for God's sake do:
Oh, it does me good to hear his glories told.

Richmond. Leicester, I saw King Richard with his fist
Strike dead the son of Austrian Leopold,
And then I saw him, by the duke's command,
Compass'd and taken by a troop of men;
Who led King Richard to a lion's den.
Opening the door, and in a paved court,
The cowards left King Richard weaponless:
Anon comes forth the fire-eyed dreadful beast,
And with a heart-amazing voice he roar'd,
Opening (like hell) his iron-toothed jaws,
And stretching out his fierce death-threatening paws.
I tell thee, Leicester, and I smile thereat,
(Though then, God knows, I had no power to smile)
I stood by treacherous Austria all the while,

* The return of Leicester and Richmond, after their exit just before, is not mentioned in the 4to.

Who in a gallery, with iron grates,
Staid to behold King Richard made a prey.

Leicester. What was't thou smiledst at in Austria :

Richmond. Leicester, he shook, so help me God, he
shook,

With very terror at the lion's look.

Leicester. Ah, coward ! but go on, what Richard did.

Richmond. Richard about his right hand wound a
scarf

(God quite her for it) given him by a maid :

With endless good may that good deed be paid !

And thrust that arm down the devouring throat

Of the fierce lion, and withdrawing it,

Drew out the strong heart of the monstrous beast,

And left the senseless body on the ground.

Leicester. Oh, royal Richard ! Richmond look on John ;
Does he not quake in hearing this discourse ?

Come, we will leave him Richmond : let us go.

John make suit for grace, that is your means you
know. [Exeunt.

John. A mischief on that Leicester ! is he gone ?

'Twere best go too, lest in some mad fit,

He turn again, and lead me prisoner.

Southward I dare not fly : fain, fain I would

To Scotland bend my course ; but all the woods

Are full of outlaws, that in Kendall green,

Follow the outlaw'd Earl of Huntington.

Well, I will clothe myself in such a suit,

And by that means as well 'scape all pursuit,

As pass the danger-threatening Huntington ;

For having many outlaws they'll think me

By my attire one of their mates to be.

[Exit.

SCENE II.

Enter SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN, and FRIAR TUCK.

Friar. Scarlet and John, so God me save,

No mind unto my beads I have :

I think it be a luckless day,

For I can neither sing, nor say ;

Nor have I any power to look,
On portass, or on matin book.

Scarlet. What is the reason, tell us Friar?

Friar. And would ye have me be no liar?

Little John. No, God defend that you should lie :
A churchman be a liar ! fie.

Friar. Then, by this hallow'd crucifix,
The holy water, and the pix,
It greatly at my stomach sticks,
That all this day we had no guess,*
And have of meat so many a mess.

MUCH brings out *ELY*, like a countryman with a basket.

Much. Well, and ye be but a market, ye are but a
market man.

Ely. I am sure, sir, I do you no hurt, do I?

Scarlet. We shall have company, no doubt :
My fellow Much hath found one out.

Friar. A fox, a fox ! as I am friar,
Much is well worthy of good hire.

Little John. Say Friar, soothly, know'st thou him ?

Friar. It is a wolf in a sheep's skin.
Go, call our master, Little John ;
A glad man will he be anon.
It's Ely, man, the chancellor

Little John. God's pity ! look unto him, Friar.

[*Exit Little John.*]

Much. What ha' ye eggs to sell old fellow ?

Ely. I, sir, some few ; and those my need constrains me
bear to Mansfield, that I may sell them there to buy me
bread.

Scarlet. Alas, good man ! I prithee where dost dwell ?

Ely. I dwell in Oxon sir.

Scarlet. I know the town.

Much. Alas, poor fellow ! if thou dwell with oxen, it's
strange they do not gore thee with their horns.

Ely. Masters, I tell ye truly where I dwell,
And whither I am going ; let me go.
Your master would be much displeas'd, I know,
If he should hear you hinder poor men thus.

* *Guests*, were often formerly spelt *guess*, whether it were or were
not necessary for the rhyme.

Friar. Father, one word with you before we part.

Much. Scarlet, the friar will make us have anger all.
Farewell; and bear me witness, though I staid him,
I staid him not. An old fellow, and a market man! [*Exit.*

Friar. Whoop! in your riddles Much? then we shall
ha't.

Scarlet. What dost thou Friar? prithee let him go.

Friar. I prithee, Scarlet, let us two alone.

Ely. Friar, I see thou knowst me: let me go,
And many a good turn I to thee will owe.

Friar. My master's service bids me answer no,
Yet love of holy churchmen wills it so.

Well, good my lord, I will do what I may
To let your holiness escape away.

*Enter ROBIN and LITTLE JOHN.**

Here comes my master: if he question you,
Answer him like a plain man, and you may pass.

Ely. Thanks, Friar.

Friar. Oh, my lord thinks me an ass.

Robin. Friar, what honest man is there with thee?

Friar. A silly man, good master. I will speak for you:
Stand you aloof, for fear they note your face. [*to Ely.*

Master in plain,
It were but in vain,
Long to detain,
With toys or with bables,
With fond feigned fables;
But him that you see,
In so mean degree,
Is the Lord Ely,
That help'd to exile you,
That oft did revile you.
Though in his fall,
His train be but small,
And no man at all
Will give him the wall,
Nor lord doth him call,
Yet he did ride,

* The stage direction in the original is only "Enter Robin."

'On jennets pied,
And knights by his side
Did foot it each tide.
Oh, see the fall of pride.*

Robin. Friar, enough.

Friar. I pray, sir, let him go,
He is a very simple man in show:
He dwells at Oxon, and to us doth say,
To Mansfield market he doth take his way.

Little John. Friar, this is not Mansfield market day.

Robin. What would he sell?

Friar. Eggs sir, as he says.

Robin. Scarlet, go thy ways:
Take in this old man, fill his skin with venison,
And after give him money for his eggs.

Ely. No sir, I thank you, I have promis'd them
To master Baileys wife of Mansfield, all.

Robin. Nay, sir, you do me wrong:
No Bailey, nor his wife shall have an egg.
Scarlet, I say, take his eggs, and give him money.

Ely. Pray sir.

Friar. Tush, let him have your eggs.

Ely. Faith, I have none.

Friar. God's pity, then, he will find you soon.

Scarlet. Here are no eggs, nor any thing but hay.
Yes, by the mass, here's somewhat like a seal!

Robin. Oh God!

My prince's seal! fair England's royal seal!
Tell me, thou man of death, thou wicked man,
How cam'st thou by this seal? wilt thou not speak?
Bring burning irons! I will make him speak.
For I do know the poor distressed lord,
The king's vice-gerent, learned, reverend Ely,
Flying the fury of ambitious John,
Is murder'd by this peasant. Speak, vile man,
Where thou hast done thrice honorable Ely?

Ely. Why dost thou grace Ely with stiles of grace,
Who thee with all his power sought to disgrace?

* This must have been spoken aside to Robin Hood.

Robin. Belike, his wisdom saw some fault in me.

Ely. No, I assure thee, honorable earl;

It was his envy, no defect of thine,
And the persuasions of the prior of York,
Which Ely now repents. See, Huntington,
Ely himself, and pity him, good son.

Robin. Alas, for woe! alack, that so great state
The malice of this world should ruin!

Come in, great lord, sit down and take thy ease,
Receive the seal, and pardon my offence.

With me you shall be safe, and if you please,
Till Richard come, from all men's violence.

Aged Fitzwater, banished by John,

And his fair daughter shall converse with you:

I, and my men, that me attend upon,

Shall give you all that is to honor due.

Will you accept my service, noble lord?

Ely. Thy kindness drives me to such inward shame,
That, for my life, I no reply can frame.

Go; I will follow. Blessed mayst thou be,

That thus reliev'st thy foes in misery! [Exeunt.

Little John. Skelton, a word or two beside the play.

Friar. Now, Sir John Eltham, what is't you would say?

Little John. Methinks, I see no jests of Robin Hood,

No merry morrices of Friar Tuck,

No pleasant skippings up and down the wood,

No hunting songs, no coursing of the buck.

Pray God this play of our's may have good luck,

And the king's majesty mislike it not.

Friar. And if he do, what can we do to that?

I promis'd him a play of Robin Hood,

His honorable life in merry Sherwood.

His majesty himself survey'd the plot,

And bade me boldly write it; it was good.

For merry jests they have been shewn before,

As how the friar fell into the well

For love of Jenny, that fair bonny belle;

How Greenleaf robb'd the shrieve of Nottingham,

And other mirthful matter full of game.

Our play expresses noble Robert's wrong;

His mild forgetting treacherous injury :
The abbot's malice, rak'd in cinders long,
Breaks out at last with Robin's Tragedy.
If these, that hear the history rehears'd,
Condemn my play when it begins to spring,
I'll let it wither while it is a bud,
And never shew the flower to the king.

Little John. One thing beside : you fall into your vein
Of ribble rabble rhimes Skeltonical,
So oft, and stand so long, that you offend,

Friar. It is a fault I hardly can amend.
Oh, how I champ my tongue to talk these terms !
I do forget, oft times, my friar's part ;
But pull me by the sleeve when I exceed,
And you shall see me mend that fault indeed.

Wherefore, still sit you,
Doth Skelton entreat you,
While he facetè
Will briefly repeat ye
The history all,
And tale tragical,
By whose treachery,
And base injury,
Robin the good,
Call'd Robin Hood,
Died in Sherwood.
Which till you see,
Be ruled by me :
Sit patiently,
And give a plaudite,
If any thing please ye.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter WARMAN.

Warman. Banish'd from all, of all I am bereft !
No more than what I wear unto me left.
Oh wretched, wretched grief, desertful fall !
Striving to get all, I am reft of all.

[et if I could awhile myself relieve,
Till Ely be in some place settled,
A double restitution should I get,
And these sharp sorrows, that have joy suppress'd,
Should turn to joy with double interest.

Enter a GENTLEMAN, Warman's Cousin.

And in good time, here comes my cousin Warman,
Whom I have often pleasur'd in my time.
His house at Bingham I bestow'd on him,
And therefore doubt not, he will give me house-room.
Good even, cousin.

Cousin. Oh, cousin Warman, what good news with you?

Warman. Whither so far a-foot walk you in Sherwood?

Cousin. I came from Rotheram; and by hither Farnsfield,

My horse did tire, and I walk'd home a-foot.

Warman. I do beseech you, cousin, at some friends,
Or at your own house, for a week or two
Give me some succour.

Cousin. Ha! succour say you?

No sir: I heard at Mansfield how the matter stands:

~~How you have justly lost your goods and lands,~~

~~And that the prince's indignation~~

~~Will fall on any that relieves your state.~~

~~Away from me! your treacheries I hate.~~

~~You, when your noble master was undone,~~

~~(That honourable minded Huntington)~~

~~Who forwarder than you, all to distraint?~~ ✓

And, as a wolf that chaseth on the plain

The harmless hind, so wolf-like you pursued

Him and his servants. Vile ingratitude,

Damn'd Judasism,* false wrong, abhorred treachery,

Impious wickedness, wicked impiety!

Out, out upon thee! foh, I spit at thee!

Warman. Good cousin.

Cousin. Away! I'll spurn thee if thou follow me. [*Exit.*]

* The 4to. has it "Damn'd Judaism," but the allusion is to the treachery of Judas. The Jailer of Nottingham afterwards calls Warman Judas.

Warman. Oh, just heaven, how thou plagu'st iniquity!
All that he has, my hand on him bestowed.
My master gave me all I ever owed,
My master I abus'd in his distress;
In mine, my kinsman leaves me comfortless.

Enter JAILER of Nottingham, leading a dog.
Here comes another; one that yesterday
Was at my service, came when I did call,
And him I made jailer of Nottingham:
Perchance some pity dwells within the man.
Jailer, well met; dost thou not know me man?

Jailer. Yes, thou art Warman; every knave knows thee.

Warman. Thou know'st I was thy master yesterday.

Jailer. I, but 'tis not as it was: farewell; go by.

Warman. Good George, relieve my bitter misery.

Jailer. By this flesh and blood I will not.
No if I do, the devil take me quick.
I have no money, beggar: balk the way!

Warman. I do not ask thee money.

Jailer. Wouldst ha' meat?

Warman. Would God I had a little bread to eat.

Jailer. Soft, let me feel my bag. Oh, here is meat,
That I put up at Retford for my dog:
I care not greatly if I spare him this.

Warman. I prithee do.

*Jailer.** Yet let me search my conscience for it first:
My dog's my servant, faithful, trusty, true;
But Warman was a traitor to his lord,
A reprobate, a rascal and a Jew,
Worser than dogs, of men to be abhorr'd!
Starve, therefore, Warman; dog, receive thy due.
Follow me not, lest I belabour you,
You half fac'd goat, you thick-cheek'd chittyface:
You Judas, villain! you that have undone
The honorable Robert, Earl of Huntington. [Exit.

Warman. Worse than a dog the villain me respects,
His dog he feeds, me in my need rejects.

* In the old copy this is made a part of what Warman speaks, which is a mistake, as is evident from the context.

What shall I do? yonder I see a shed,
A little cottage, where a woman dwells,
Whose husband I from death delivered:
If she deny me, then I faint and die.

Ho! goodwife Thompson!

Woman. What a noise is there?

A foul shame on ye! is it you that knock'd?

Warman. What, do you know me then?

Woman. Whoop! who knows not you?

The beggar'd, banish'd shrieve of Nottingham,

You that betray'd your master: is't not you?

Yes, a shame on you! and, forsooth, ye come,

To have some succour here, because you sav'd

My unthrift husband from the gallow-tree.

A pox upon you both! would both for me,

Were hang'd together. But soft, let me see;

The man looks faint: feel'st thou indeed distress?

Warman. Oh, do not mock me in my heaviness.

Woman. Indeed, I do not. Well, I have within
A caudle made, I will go fetch it him. [Exit.

Warman. Oh, blessed woman! comfortable word!
Be quiet entrails, you shall be reliev'd.

*Enter WOMAN.**

Woman. Here Warman, put this hempen caudle o'er
thy head.

See downward yonder is thy master's walk;

And like a Judas, on some rotten tree,

Hang up this rotten trunk of misery,

That goers by, thy wretched end may see.

Stir'st thou not villain? get thee from my door:

A plague upon thee, haste and hang thyself.

Run, rogue, away! 'tis thou that hast undone

Thy noble master, Earl of Huntington. [Exit.

Warman. Good counsel, and good comfort, by my
faith.

Three doctors are of one opinion,

That Warman must make speed to hang himself.

The last hath given a caudle comfortable,

* Her exit and re-entrance are not marked in the old copy. Perhaps she only speaks from a window.

That to recure my griefs is strong and able :
I'll take her medicine, and I'll chuse this way,
Wherein, she saith, my master hath his walk ;
There will I offer life for treachery,
And hang, a wonder to all goers by.
But soft ! what sound harmonious is this ?
What birds are these, that sing so cheerfully,
As if they did salute the flowering spring ?
Fitter it were with tunes more dolefully
They shriek'd out sorrow, than thus cheerly sing.
I will go seek sad desperation's cell ;
This is not it, for here are green leav'd trees.
Ah, for one winter-bitten bared bough,
Whereon a wretched life a wretch would leese.
Oh, here is one ! Thrice blessed be this tree,
If a man cursed, may a blessing give.

Enter OLD FITZWATER.

But out alas ! yonder comes one to me
To hinder death, when I detest to live.

Fitzwater. What woeful voice hear I within this wood ?
What wretch is there complains of wretchedness ?

Warman. A man, old man, bereav'd of all earth's
good,
And desperately seeks death in this distress.

Fitzwater. Seek not for that which will be here too
soon,
At least if thou be guilty of ill deeds.
Where art thou, son ? come, and nearer sit :
Hear wholesome counsel 'gainst unhallow'd thoughts.

Warman. The man is blind. Muffle the eye of day,
Ye gloomy clouds (and darker than my deeds,
That darker be than pitchy sable night)
Muster together on these high topp'd trees,
That not a spark of light thorough their sprays,
May hinder what I mean to execute.

Fitzwater. What dost thou mutter ? Hear me, woe-
ful man.

Enter MARIAN with meat.

Marian. Good morrow, father.

Fitzwater. Welcome, lovely maid ;
And in good time, I trust, you hither come.

Look if you see not a distressful man,
That to himself intendeth violence :
One such even now was here, and is not far.
Seek, I beseech you ; save him if you may.

Marian. Alas ! here is, here is a man enrag'd,
Fastening a halter on a wither'd bough,
And stares upon me with such frightened looks,
As I am fearful of his sharp aspect.

Fitzwater. What mean'st thou wretch ? say, what
is't thou wilt do ?

Warman. As Judas did, so I intend to do,
For I have done already as he did :
His master he betray'd so I have mine.
Fair mistress, look not on me with your blessed eyne :
From them, as from some excellence divine,
Sparkles sharp judgment, and commands with speed.
Fair, fare you well : foul fortune is my fate ;
As all betrayers, I die desperate.

Fitzwater. Soft, ho ! Go, Marian, call in Robin Hood :
'Tis Warman, woman, that was once his steward.

Marian. Alas ! although it be, yet save his life !
I will send help unto you presently. [Exit.

Fitzwater. Nay, Warman, stay ; thou shalt have thy
will.

Warman. Art thou a blind man, and canst see my
shame ?

To hinder treachers God restoreth sight,
And giveth infants tongues to cry aloud,
A woeful woe against the treacherous.

Enter MUCH, running.

Much. Hold, hold, hold ! I hear say, my fellow War-
man is about to hang himself, and make I some speed
to save him a labour. Oh, good master Justice Shrieve,
have you execution in hand, and is there such a mur-
rain among thieves and hangmen, that you play two
parts in one ? For old acquaintance, I will play one
part.

The knot under the ear, the knitting to the tree :
Good master Warman, leave that work for me.

Warman. Despatch me, Much, and I will pray for thee.

Much. Nay, keep your prayers, nobody sees us.

[*He takes the rope and offers to climb.*]

Fitzwater. Down, sirrah, down! whither, a knave's name, climb you?

Much. A plague on ye for a blind sinksanker! would I were your match. You are much blind, i'faith, can hit so right.

Enter LITTLE JOHN.

Little John. What, master Warman, are ye come to yield

A true account for your false stewardship?

Enter SCARLET and SCATHLOCK.

Scath. Much, if thou means to get a hundred pound, Present us to the shrieve of Nottingham.

Much. Mass, I think there was such purclamation. Come, my small fellow, John, You shall have half, and therefore bring in one.

Little John. No, my big fellow, honest master Much, Take all unto yourself: I'll be no half.

Much. Then stand: you shall be the two thieves, and I will be the presenter.

Oh master Shrieve of Nottingham,
When ears unto my tidings came,*

(I'll speak in prose, I miss this verse vilely) that Scathlock and Scarlet were arrested by Robin Hood my master, and little John my fellow, and Much, his servant, and taken from you master Shrieve, being well forward in the hanging way, wherein ye now are, (and God keep ye in the same) and also that you, master Shrieve, would give any man in town, city, or country a hundred pound of lawful arrant† money of England, that would bring the same two thieves, being these two; now I, the said Much, challenge of you the said shrieve, bringing them, the same money.

Scarlet. Faith, he cannot pay thee Much.

Much. I, but while this end is in my hand, and that about his neck, he is bound to it.

* He blunders. Of course he means "when tidings came to his ears." He does not make much better of his prose.

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Enter ROBIN, ELY, MARIAN.

Warman. Mock on, mock on : make me your jesting game.

I do deserve much more than this small shame.

Robin. Disconsolate, and poor dejected man,
Cast from thy neck that shameful sign of death,
And live for me, if thou amend thy life,
As much in favour as thou ever didst.

Warman. Oh, worse than any death,
When a man, wrong'd, his wronger pitieth !

Ely. Warman, be comforted, rise and amend :
On my word Robin Hood will be thy friend.

Robin. I will indeed : go in, heart-broken man.
Father Fitzwater pray lead him in.

Kind Marian, with sweet comforts comfort him,
And my tall yeomen, as you me affect,
Upbraid him not with his forepassed life.

Warman, go in ; go in and comfort thee.

Warman. Oh, God requite your honor's courtesy.

Marian. Scathlock or Scarlet, help us some of ye.

[*Exeunt Warman, Marian, Fitzwater, Scathlock,
Scarlet, Much.*]

Enter FRIAR TUCK *in his truss, without his weed.*

Friar. Jesu benedicite !

Pity on pity,
Mercy on mercy,
Misery on misery !
Oh, such a sight,
As by this light,
Doth me affright !

Robin. Tell us the matter, prithee, holy Friar.

Friar. Sir Doncaster the priest, and the proud Prior
Are stripp'd and wounded in the way to Bawtrey,
And if there go not speedy remedy,
They'll die, they'll die in this extremity.

Robin. Alas ! direct us to that wretched place :
I love mine uncle, though he hateth me.

Friar. My weed I cast to keep them from the cold,
And Jenny, gentle girl, tore all her smock
The bloody issue of their wounds to stop.

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Robin. Will you go with us, my good Lord of Ely?
Ely. I will, and ever praise thy perfect charity.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter PRINCE JOHN, solus, in green: bow and arrows.

John. Why this is somewhat like: now may I sing,
 As did the Wakefield Pinder in his note.

At Michaelmas cometh my covenant out,

My master gives me my fee:

Then, Robin, I'll wear thy Kendall green,

*And wend to the green wood with thee.**

But for a name now: John it must not be,
 Already Little John on him attends:
 Greenleaf? Nay, surely there's such a one already:
 Well, I'll be Woodnet, hap what happen may.

Enter SCATHLOCK.

Here comes a green coat, (good luck be my guide)
 Some sudden shift might help me to provide.

Scathlock. What, fellow William, did you meet our
 master?

John. I did not meet him yet, my honest friend.

Scathlock. My honest friend! why, what a term is
 here?

My name is Scathlock, man, and if thou be
 No other than thy garments shew to me,
 Thou art my fellow, though I know thee not.
 What is thy name? When wert thou entertain'd?

John. My name is Woodnet; and this very day,
 My noble master, Earl of Huntington,
 Did give me both my fee and livery.

Scathlock. Your noble master, Earl of Huntington!
 I'll lay a crown you are a counterfeit,
 And that, you know, lacks money of a noble.
 Did you receive your livery and fee,
 And never heard our orders read unto you?

* This is from the old ballad, "The jolly Pinder of Wakefield,
 with Robin Hood, Scarlet and John," with variations:

"At Michaelmas next my cov'nant comes out
 When every man gathers his fee;
 Then I'll take my blue blade all in my hand,
 And plod to the green-wood with thee."

Ritson's Robin Hood II. 18.

What was the oath was given you by the Friar?

John. Who? Friar Tuck?

Scathlock. I, do not play the liar,
For he comes here himself to shrive.

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

John. Scathlock, farewell; I will away.

Scathlock. See you this arrow? it says nay.
Through both your sides shall fly this feather,
If presently you come not hither.

Friar. Now heaven's true liberality
Fall ever for his charity
Upon the head of Robin Hood,
That to his very foes doth good.
Lord God! how he laments the Prior,
And bathes his wounds against the fire.
Fair Marian, God requite it her,
Doth even as much for Doncaster,
Whom newly she hath lain in bed,
To rest his weary wounded head.

Scathlock. Ho! Friar Tuck, know you this mate?

Friar. What's he?

Scathlock. He says my master late
Gave him his fee and livery.

Friar. It is a leasing, credit me.
How chance, sir, then you were not sworn?

John. What mean this groom and lozel friar,
So strictly matters to enquire?
Had I a sword and buckler here,
You should aby these questions dear.

Friar. Say'st thou me so, lad? lend him thine,
For in this bush here lieth mine.
Now will I try this new-come guest;

Scathlock. I am his first man, Friar Tuck,
And if I fail, and have no luck,
Then thou with him shalt have a pluck.

Friar. Be it so Scathlock. Hold thee lad,
No better weapons can be had:
The dew doth them a little rust;
But, hear ye, they are tools of trust.*

* It is evident that Friar Tuck here gives John a sword.

John. Gramercy, Friar, for this gift,
And if thou come unto my shrift,
I'll make thee call those fellows fools
That on their foes bestow such tools.

Scathlock. Come, let us to 't.

[*Fight, and the Friar looks on.*]

Friar. The youth is deliver* and light,
He presseth Scathlock with his might:
Now, by my beads, to do him right,
I think he be some tried knight.

Scathlock. Stay let us breathe!

John. I will not stay:

If you leave, Friar come away:

Scathlock. I prithee, Friar, hold him play.

Friar. Friar Tuck will do the best he may. [*Fight.*]

Enter MARIAN.

Marian. Why, what a noise of swords is here!
Fellows, and fight our bower so near?

Scathlock. Mistress, he is no man of yours,
That fights so fast with Friar Tuck;
But, on my word, he is a man
As good for strength as any can.

Marian. Indeed, he's more than common men can be:
In his high heart there dwells the blood of kings.
~~Go call my Robin, Scathlock: 'tis Prince John.~~ ✓

Scathlock. Mistress I will: I pray part the fray. [*Eit.*]

Marian. I prithee go, I will do what I may.
Friar, I charge thee hold thy hand.

Friar. Nay, younker, to your tackling stand.
What all amort,† will you not fight?

John. I yield, unconquer'd by thy might;
But by Matilda's glorious sight.

Friar. Mistress, he knows you: what is he?

John. Like to amazing wonder she appears,

* *Deliver* means *active*, and it has been conjectured that it is the parent of the word "clever." Beaumont and Fletcher use the adverb *deliverly*, but latter it is seldom met with.

† The origin of *amort* is French, and sometimes it is written *Tout-a-la-mort*, as in *The Contention between Liberalitie and Prodigalitie*, 1602, Sign. B. as pointed out in a note to *Ram Alley*, D. O. P. Vol. v. 400.

And from her eye flies love unto my heart,
Attended by suspicious thoughts and fears
That numb the vigour of each outward part.
Only my sight hath all satiety,
And fulness of delight, viewing her deity.

Marian. But I have no delight in you, prince John.

Friar. Is this prince John?

Give me thy hand, thou art a proper man :
And for this morning's work, by saints above,
Be ever sure of Friar Tuck's true love.

John. Be not offended that I touch thy shrine ;
Make this hand happy, let it fold in thine.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, FITZWATER, ELY, WARMAN.

Robin. What saucy woodman, Marian, stands so
near?

John. A woodman, Robin, that would strike your deer
With all his heart. Nay, never look so strange,
You see this fickle world is full of change :
John is a ranger, man, compell'd to range.

Fitzwater. You are young, wild lord, and well may
travel bear.

John. What, my old friend Fitzwater, are you there ?
And you, lord Ely ? and old best betrust ?
Then I perceive that to this gear we must.
A mess of my good friends : which of you four
Will purchase thanks by yielding to the king
The body of the rash rebellious John ?
Will you Fitzwater ?

Fitzwater. No, John, I defy *
To stain my old hands in thy youthful blood.

John. You will lord Ely ; I am sure you will.

Ely. Be sure, young man, my age means thee no ill.

* *Defy* is here used in the sense of *refuse*, which was not uncommon : thus in the *Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, we have this passage, "Or, as I said, for ever I *defy* your company." In the *Four Prentices of London*, (D. O. P. vi. 419. Act I. scene 1.) the old earl of Boloigne says,

"Vain pleasures I abhor, all things *defy*,
That teach not to despair, or how to die."

Other instances are collected in a note to the words "I do *defy* thy conjuration," from *Romeo and Juliet*, Act. V. scene 3.

John. Oh, you will have the praise, brave Robin Hood,

The lusty outlaw, lord of this large wood :
He'll lead a king's son prisoner to a king,
And bid the brother smite the brother dead.

Robin. My purpose you have much misconstrued :
Prince John, I would not for the wide world's wealth
Incense his majesty, but do my best
To mitigate his wrath, if he be mov'd.

John. Will none of you ? then, here's one I dare say,
That from his childhood knows how to betray :
Warman will you not help to hinder all you may ?

Warman. With what I have been twit me not, my lord :
My old sins at my soul I do detest.

John. Then, that he came this way prince John was blest.

Forgive me Ely ; pardon me Fitzwater :
And Robin, to thy hands myself I yield.

Robin. And as my heart from hurt I will thee shield.

Enter MUCH running.

Much. Master fly ! hide ye mistress ! we all shall be taken.

Robin. Why, what's the matter ?

Much. The king ! the king ! and twelve and twenty score of horses.

Robin. Peace fool ! we have no cause from him to fly.

Enter SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN.

Little John. Scarlet and I were hunting on the plain ;

To us came royal Richard from his train,
For a great train of his is hard at hand,
And question'd us, if we serv'd Robin Hood ?
I said we did ; and then his Majesty,
Putting this massy chain about my neck,
Said what I shame to say, but joy'd to hear.
Let Scarlet tell it, it befits not me.

Scarlet. Quoth our good king, thy name is Little John,
And thou hast long time serv'd earl Huntington :

Because thou left'st him not in misery,
A hundred marks I give thee yearly fee,
~~And from henceforth thou shalt a squire be.~~

Much. Oh lord, what luck had I to run away!
I should have been made a knight, or a lady, sure.

Scarlet. Go, said the king, and to your master say,
Richard is come to call him to the court,
~~and with his kingly presence chase the clouds~~
~~Of grief and sorrow, that in misty shades,~~
~~Have veil'd the honor of earl Huntington.~~

Robin. Now God preserve him! hie you back again,
And guide him, lest in bye-paths he mistake.
Much, fetch a richer garment for my father;
Good Friar Tuck, I prithee rouse thy wits:
Warman, visit mine uncle and Sir Doncaster,
See if they can come forth to grace our show.
God's pity, Marian, let your Jenny wait.
Thanks, my lord chancellor, you are well prepar'd;
And good prince John, since you are all in green,
Disdain not to attend on Robin Hood:
Frolic I pray; I trust to do ye good.

*Enter PRIOR and SIR DONCASTER.**
Welcome good uncle, welcome Sir Doncaster.
Say, will ye sit; I fear ye cannot stand.

Prior. Yes, very well.

Robin. Why, cheerly, cheerly then.
The trumpet sounds, the king is now at hand:
Lords, yeomen, maids, in decent order stand.

The trumpets sound, the while Robin places them. Enter first, bare-headed, LITTLE JOHN and SCARLET; likewise CHESTER and LEICESTER, bearing the sword and sceptre; the KING follows crowned, clad in green; after him QUEEN MOTHER; after her SALISBURY and RICHMOND. SCARLET and SCATHLOCK turn to ROBIN HOOD, who with all his company kneel down and cry.

All. God save King Richard! Lord preserve your Grace!

* Their entrance is not marked in the original.

Much. Nay, keep your prayers, nobody sees us.

[*He takes the rope and offers to climb.*]

Fitzwater. Down, sirrah, down! whither, a knave's name, climb you?

Much. A plague on ye for a blind sinksanker! would I were your match. You are much blind, i'faith, can hit so right.

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Had I a sword and buckler here,
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For in this bush here lieth mine.
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And if I fail, and have no luck,
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To stain my old hands in thy youthful blood.

John. You will lord Ely ; I am sure you will.

Ely. Be sure, young man, my age means thee no ill.

* *Defy* is here used in the sense of *refuse*, which was not uncommon : thus in the *Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, we have this passage, "Or, as I said, for ever I *defy* your company." In the *Four Prentices of London*, (D. O. P. vi. 419. Act I. scene 1.) the old earl of Boloigne says,

"Vain pleasures I abhor, all things *defy*,
That teach not to despair, or how to die."

Other instances are collected in a note to the words "I do *defy* thy conjuration," from *Romeo and Juliet*, Act. V. scene 3.

John. Oh, you will have the praise, brave Robin Hood,

The lusty outlaw, lord of this large wood :
He'll lead a king's son prisoner to a king,
And bid the brother smite the brother dead.

Robin. My purpose you have much misconstrued.
Prince John, I would not for the wide world's wealth
Incense his majesty, but do my best
To mitigate his wrath, if he be mov'd.

John. Will none of you ? then, here's one I dare :
That from his childhood knows how to betray :
Warman will you not help to hinder all you may ?

Warman. With what I have been twit me not,
lord :

My old sins at my soul I do detest.

John. Then, that he came this way prince John
blest.

Forgive me Ely ; pardon me Fitzwater :
And Robin, to thy hands myself I yield.

Robin. And as my heart from hurt I will thee shield.

Enter MUCH running.

Much. Master fly ! hide ye mistress ! we all shall
taken.

Robin. Why, what's the matter ?

Much. The king ! the king ! and twelve
twenty score of horses.

Robin. Peace fool ! we have no cause from him to

Enter SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN.

Little John. Scarlet and I were hunting on
plain ;

To us came royal Richard from his train,
For a great train of his is hard at hand,
And question'd us, if we serv'd Robin Hood ?
I said we did ; and then his Majesty,
Putting this massy chain about my neck,
Said what I shame to say, but joy'd to hear.
Let Scarlet tell it, it befits not me.

Scarlet. Quoth our good king, thy name is Little
John,

And thou hast long time serv'd earl Huntington :

Because thou left'st him not in misery,
A hundred marks I give thee yearly fee,
~~And from henceforth thou shalt a squire be.~~

Much. Oh lord, what luck had I to run away!
I should have been made a knight, or a lady, sure.

Scarlet. Go, said the king, and to your master say,
Richard is come to call him to the court,
~~And with his kingly presence chase the clouds~~
~~Of grief and sorrow, that in misty shades,~~
~~Have veild the honor of earl Huntington.~~ *Richard over*

Robin. Now God preserve him! hie you back again,
And guide him, lest in bye-paths he mistake.
Much, fetch a richer garment for my father;
Good Friar Tuck, I prithee rouse thy wits:
Warman, visit mine uncle and Sir Doncaster,
See if they can come forth to grace our show.
God's pity, Marian, let your Jenny wait.
Thanks, my lord chancellor, you are well prepar'd;
And good prince John, since you are all in green,
Disdain not to attend on Robin Hood:
Frolic I pray; I trust to do ye good.

*Enter PRIOR and SIR DONCASTER.**
Welcome good uncle, welcome Sir Doncaster.
Say, will ye sit; I fear ye cannot stand.

Prior. Yes, very well.

Robin. Why, cheerly, cheerly then.
The trumpet sounds, the king is now at hand:
Lords, yeomen, maids, in decent order stand.

The trumpets sound, the while Robin places them. Enter first, bare-headed, LITTLE JOHN and SCARLET; likewise CHESTER and LEICESTER, bearing the sword and sceptre; the KING follows crowned, clad in green; after him QUEEN MOTHER; after her SALISBURY and RICHMOND. SCARLET and SCATHLOCK turn to ROBIN HOOD, who with all his company kneel down and cry.

All. God save King Richard! Lord preserve your Grace!

* Their entrance is not marked in the original.

Much. Nay, keep your prayers, nobody sees us.

[*He takes the rope and offers to climb.*

Fitzwater. Down, sirrah, down! whither, a knave's name, climb you?

Much. A plague on ye for a blind sinksanker! would I were your match. You are much blind, i'faith, can hit so right.

Enter LITTLE JOHN.

Little John. What, master Warman, are ye come to yield

A true account for your false stewardship?

Enter SCARLET and SCATHLOCK.

Scath. Much, if thou means to get a hundred pound, Present us to the shrieve of Nottingham.

Much. Mass, I think there was such purclamation. Come, my small fellow, John, You shall have half, and therefore bring in one.

Little John. No, my big fellow, honest master Much, Take all unto yourself: I'll be no half.

Much. Then stand: you shall be the two thieves, and I will be the presenter.

Oh master Shrieve of Nottingham,
When ears unto my tidings came,*

(I'll speak in prose, I miss this verse vilely) that Scathlock and Scarlet were arrested by Robin Hood my master, and little John my fellow, and Much, his servant, and taken from you master Shrieve, being well forward in the hanging way, wherein ye now are, (and God keep ye in the same) and also that you, master Shrieve, would give any man in town, city, or country a hundred pound of lawful arrant† money of England, that would bring the same two thieves, being these two; now I, the said Much, challenge of you the said shrieve, bringing them, the same money.

Scarlet. Faith, he cannot pay thee Much.

Much. I, but while this end is in my hand, and that about his neck, he is bound to it.

* He blunders. Of course he means "when tidings came to his ears." He does not make much better of his prose.

† Qy. current.

Enter ROBIN, ELY, MARIAN.

Warman. Mock on, mock on : make me your jesting game.

I do deserve much more than this small shame.

Robin. Disconsolate, and poor dejected man,
Cast from thy neck that shameful sign of death,
And live for me, if thou amend thy life,
As much in favour as thou ever didst.

Warman. Oh, worse than any death,
When a man, wrong'd, his wronger pitieth !

Ely. Warman, be comforted, rise and amend :
On my word Robin Hood will be thy friend.

Robin. I will indeed : go in, heart-broken man.
Father Fitzwater pray lead him in.

Kind Marian, with sweet comforts comfort him,
And my tall yeomen, as you me affect,
Upbraid him not with his forepassed life.

Warman, go in ; go in and comfort thee.

Warman. Oh, God requite your honor's courtesy.

Marian. Scathlock or Scarlet, help us some of ye.

[*Exeunt Warman, Marian, Fitzwater, Scathlock, Scarlet, Much.*]

Enter FRIAR TUCK *in his truss, without his weed.*

Friar. Jesu benedicite !

Pity on pity,
Mercy on mercy,
Misery on misery !
Oh, such a sight,
As by this light,
Doth me affright !

Robin. Tell us the matter, prithee, holy Friar.

Friar. Sir Doncaster the priest, and the proud Prior
Are stripp'd and wounded in the way to Bawtrey,
And if there go not speedy remedy,
They'll die, they'll die in this extremity.

Robin. Alas ! direct us to that wretched place :
I love mine uncle, though he hateth me.

Friar. My weed I cast to keep them from the cold,
And Jenny, gentle girl, tore all her smock
The bloody issue of their wounds to stop.

*Robin requite
Warman
I
who
has
deserve
in
his
distress*

Robin. Will you go with us, my good Lord of Ely?
Ely. I will, and ever praise thy perfect charity.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter PRINCE JOHN, solus, in green: bow and arrows.

John. Why this is somewhat like: now may I sing,
 As did the Wakefield Pinder in his note.

At Michaelmas cometh my covenant out,

My master gives me my fee:

Then, Robin, I'll wear thy Kendall green,

*And wend to the green wood with thee.**

But for a name now: John it must not be,
 Already Little John on him attends:
 Greenleaf? Nay, surely there's such a one already:
 Well, I'll be Woodnet, hap what happen may.

Enter SCATHLOCK.

Here comes a green coat, (good luck be my guide)
 Some sudden shift might help me to provide.

Scathlock. What, fellow William, did you meet our
 master?

John. I did not meet him yet, my honest friend.

Scathlock. My honest friend! why, what a term is
 here?

My name is Scathlock, man, and if thou be
 No other than thy garments shew to me,
 Thou art my fellow, though I know thee not.
 What is thy name? When wert thou entertain'd?

John. My name is Woodnet; and this very day,
 My noble master, Earl of Huntington,
 Did give me both my fee and livery.

Scathlock. Your noble master, Earl of Huntington!
 I'll lay a crown you are a counterfeit,
 And that, you know, lacks money of a noble.
 Did you receive your livery and fee,
 And never heard our orders read unto you?

* This is from the old ballad, "The jolly Pinder of Wakefield,"
 with Robin Hood, Scarlet and John," with variations:

"At Michaelmas next my cov'nant comes out

When every man gathers his fee;

Then I'll take my blue blade all in my hand,

And plod to the green-wood with thee."

Ritson's Robin Hood II. 18.

What was the oath was given you by the Friar?

John. Who? Friar Tuck?

Scathlock. I, do not play the liar,
For he comes here himself to shrive.

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

John. Scathlock, farewell; I will away.

Scathlock. See you this arrow? it says nay.
Through both your sides shall fly this feather,
If presently you come not hither.

Friar. Now heaven's true liberality
Fall ever for his charity
Upon the head of Robin Hood,
That to his very foes doth good.
Lord God! how he laments the Prior,
And bathes his wounds against the fire.
Fair Marian, God requite it her,
Doth even as much for Doncaster,
Whom newly she hath lain in bed,
To rest his weary wounded head.

Scathlock. Ho! Friar Tuck, know you this mate?

Friar. What's he?

Scathlock. He says my master late
Gave him his fee and livery.

Friar. It is a leasing, credit me.
How chance, sir, then you were not sworn?

John. What mean this groom and lozel friar,
So strictly matters to enquire?
Had I a sword and buckler here,
You should aby these questions dear.

Friar. Say'st thou me so, lad? lend him thine,
For in this bush here lieth mine.
Now will I try this new-come guest;

Scathlock. I am his first man, Friar Tuck,
And if I fail, and have no luck,
Then thou with him shalt have a pluck.

Friar. Be it so Scathlock. Hold thee lad,
No better weapons can be had:
The dew doth them a little rust;
But, hear ye, they are tools of trust.*

* It is evident that Friar Tuck here gives John a sword.

John. Gramercy, Friar, for this gift,
And if thou come unto my shrift,
I'll make thee call those fellows fools
That on their foes bestow such tools.

Scathlock. Come, let us to 't.

[*Fight, and the Friar looks on.*]

Friar. The youth is deliver* and light,
He presseth Scathlock with his might:
Now, by my beads, to do him right,
I think he be some tried knight.

Scathlock. Stay let us breathe!

John. I will not stay:

If you leave, Friar come away:

Scathlock. I prithee, Friar, hold him play.

Friar. Friar Tuck will do the best he may. [*Fight.*]

Enter MARIAN.

Marian. Why, what a noise of swords is here!
Fellows, and fight our bower so near?

Scathlock. Mistress, he is no man of yours,
That fights so fast with Friar Tuck;
But, on my word, he is a man
As good for strength as any can.

Marian. Indeed, he's more than common men can be:
In his high heart there dwells the blood of kings.

Go call my Room, *Scathlock*: 'tis Prince John. ✓ d

Scathlock. Mistress I will: I pray part the fray. [*Eit.*]

Marian. I prithee go, I will do what I may.
Friar, I charge thee hold thy hand.

Friar. Nay, younker, to your tackling stand.
What all amort,† will you not fight?

John. I yield, unconquer'd by thy might;
But by Matilda's glorious sight.

Friar. Mistress, he knows you: what is he?

John. Like to amazing wonder she appears,

* *Deliver* means *active*, and it has been conjectured that it is the parent of the word "clever." Beaumont and Fletcher use the adverb *deliverly*, but latter it is seldom met with.

† The origin of *amort* is French, and sometimes it is written *Tout-a-la-mort*, as in *The Contention between Liberalitie and Prodigalitie*, 1602, Sign. B. as pointed out in a note to *Ram Alley*, D. O. P. Vol. v. 400.

And from her eye flies love unto my heart,
Attended by suspicious thoughts and fears
That numb the vigour of each outward part.
Only my sight hath all satiety,
And fulness of delight, viewing her deity.

Marian. But I have no delight in you, prince John.

Friar. Is this prince John?

Give me thy hand, thou art a proper man :
And for this morning's work, by saints above,
Be ever sure of Friar Tuck's true love.

John. Be not offended that I touch thy shrine ;
Make this hand happy, let it fold in thine.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, FITZWATER, ELY, WARMAN.

Robin. What saucy woodman, Marian, stands so near?

John. A woodman, Robin, that would strike your deer
With all his heart. Nay, never look so strange,
You see this fickle world is full of change :
John is a ranger, man, compell'd to range.

Fitzwater. You are young, wild lord, and well may travel bear.

John. What, my old friend Fitzwater, are you there ?
And you, lord Ely ? and old best betrust ?
Then I perceive that to this gear we must.
A mess of my good friends : which of you four
Will purchase thanks by yielding to the king
The body of the rash rebellious John ?
Will you Fitzwater ?

Fitzwater. No, John, I defy *
To stain my old hands in thy youthful blood.

John. You will lord Ely ; I am sure you will.

Ely. Be sure, young man, my age means thee no ill.

* *Defy* is here used in the sense of *refuse*, which was not uncommon : thus in the *Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, we have this passage, "Or, as I said, for ever I *defy* your company." In the *Four Prentices of London*, (D. O. P. vi. 419. Act I. scene 1.) the old earl of Boloigne says,

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Enter SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN.

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To us came royal Richard from his train,
For a great train of his is hard at hand,
And question'd us, if we serv'd Robin Hood ?
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Putting this massy chain about my neck,
Said what I shame to say, but joy'd to hear.
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Scarlet. Quoth our good king, thy name is Little John,
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I should have been made a knight, or a lady, sure.

Scarlet. Go, said the king, and to your master say,
Richard is come to call him to the court,
~~and with his kingly presence chase the clouds~~
~~Of grief and sorrow, that in misty shades,~~
~~Have veild the honor of earl Huntington.~~ *Richard new*

Robin. Now God preserve him! hie you back again,
And guide him, lest in bye-paths he mistake.
Much, fetch a richer garment for my father;
Good Friar Tuck, I prithee rouse thy wits:
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Welcome good uncle, welcome Sir Doncaster.
Say, will ye sit; I fear ye cannot stand.

Prior. Yes, very well.

Robin. Why, cheerly, cheerly then.
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Lords, yeomen, maids, in decent order stand.

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All. God save King Richard! Lord preserve your Grace!

* Their entrance is not marked in the original.

King. Thanks all; but chiefly Huntington to thee.

Arise, poor Earl; stand up my late lost son,
And on thy shoulders let me rest my arms,
That have been toiled long with heathen wars.
True pillar of my state, right lord indeed,
Whose honor shineth in the den of need,
I am even full of joy, and full of woe,
To see thee, glad; but sad, to see thee so.

Robin. Oh, that I could pour out my soul in prayers,
And praises for this kingly courtesy!
Do not, dread lord, grieve at my low estate:
Never so rich, never so fortunate,
Was Huntington as now himself he finds;
And to approve it, may it please your grace,
But to accept such presents at the hand
Of your poor servant, as he hath prepar'd,
You shall perceive, the Emperor of the East,
Whom you contended with at Babylon,
Had not such presents to present you with.

King. Art thou so rich? sweet, let me see thy gifts.

Robin. First, take again this jewel you had lost;
Aged Fitzwater, banished by John

King. A gem indeed! no prince hath such a one.
Good, good old man, as welcome unto me,
As cool fresh air in heat's extremity.

Fitzwater. And I as glad to kiss my sovereign's hand,
As the wreck'd swimmer when he feels the land.

Queen. Welcome, Fitzwater, I am glad to see you.

Fitzwater. I thank your grace: but let me hug these
twain,

Leicester and Richmond, Christ's sworn champions,
That follow'd Richard in his holy war.

Richmond. Noble Fitzwater, thanks, and welcome
both.

Leicester. Oh God, how glad I am to see this lord!
I cannot speak, but welcome at a word.

Robin. Next, take good Ely in your royal hands,
Who fled from death, and most uncivil bands.

King. Robin, thy gifts exceed. Morton my chancellor!
In this man giv'st thou holiness and honor.

Ely. Indeed he gives me, and he gave me life,

Preserving me from fierce pursuing foes,
When I, to blame, had wrought him many woes.
With me he likewise did preserve this seal,
Which I surrender to your majesty.

King. Keep it, good Ely, keep it still for me.

Robin. The next fair jewel that I will present
Is richer than both these; yet in the foil,
My gracious lord, it hath a foul default;
Which, if you pardon, boldly I protest,
It will in value far exceed the rest.

John. That's me he means; i'faith my turn is next.
He calls me foil, i'faith I fear a foil.

Well, 'tis a mad lord, this same Huntington. [*aside.*

Robin. Here is Prince John, your brother, whose revolt,
And folly in your absence, let me crave,
With his submission may be buried;
For he is now no more the man he was,
But dutiful in all respects to you.

King. Pray God it prove so. Well, good Huntington,
For thy sake pardon'd is our brother John,
And welcome to us in all hearty love.

Robin. This last I give, as tenants do their lands,
With a surrender to receive again
The same into their own possession;
No Marian, but Fitzwater's chaste Matilda:
The precious jewel, that poor Huntington,
Doth in this world hold as his best esteem.
Although with one hand I surrender her,
I hold the other, as one looking still
Richard returns her: so I hope he will.

King. Else God forbid: Receive thy Marian back,
And never may your love be separate,
But flourish fairly to the utmost date.

Robin. Now please my king to enter Robin's bower,
And take such homely welcome as he finds,
It shall be reckon'd as my happiness.

King. With all my heart. Then as combined friends,
Go we together: here all quarrel ends. [*Ereunt.*

Manent SIR JOHN ELTHAM and SKELTON.

Sir John. Then, Skelton, here I see you will conclude.

Skelton. And reason good : have we not held too long?

Sir John. No, in good sadness, I dare gage my life,
His highness will accept it very kindly :
But, I assure you, he expects withal,
To see the other matters tragical,
That follow in the process of the story.
Wherein are many a sad accident,
Able to make the stoutest mind relent :
I need not name the points, you know them all.
From Marian's eye shall not one tear be shed ?
Skelton, i'faith, 'tis not the fashion.
The king must grieve, the queen must take it ill :
Ely must mourn, aged Fitzwater weep,
Prince John, the lords, his yeomen must lament,
And wring their woeful hands for Robin's woe.
Then must the sick man, fainting by degrees,
Speak hollow words, and yield his Marian,
Chaste maid Matilda, to her father's hands ;
And give her, with King Richard's full consent,
His lands, his goods, late seiz'd on by the Prior,
Now by the Prior's treason made the Kings.
Skelton, there are a many other things,
That ask long time to tell them lineally ;
But ten times longer will the action be.

Skelton. Sir John, i'faith, I know not what to do,
And I confess that all you say is true.
Will you do one thing for me ? Crave the King
To see two parts : say 'tis a pretty thing.
I know you can do much ; if you excuse me,
While Skelton lives, Sir John, be bold to use me.

Sir John. I will persuade the King ; but how can you
Persuade all these beholders to content ?

Skelton. Stay, Sir John Eltham : what to them I say,
Deliver to the King from me, I pray.
Well judging hearers, for a while suspend
Your censures of this play's unfinish'd end,
And Skelton promises for this offence,
The second part shall presently be penn'd.
There shall you see, as late my friend did note,

King Richard's revels at Earl Robert's bower ;
The purpos'd mirth, and the performed moan ;
The death of Robin, and his murderers.
For interest of your stay, this will I add :
King Richard's voyage back to Austria,
The swift returned tidings of his death,
The manner of his royal funeral.*
Then John shall be a lawful crowned king,
But to Matilda bear unlawful love.
Aged Fitzwater's final banishment ;
His piteous end, of power tears to move
From marble pillars. The catastrophe
Shall shew you fair Matilda's tragedy,
Who (shunning John's pursuit) became a Nun,
At Dunmow† Abbey, where she constantly
Chose death to save her spotless chastity.
Take but my word, and if I fail in this,
Then let my pains be baffled with a hiss.

* It will be seen from the introduction to this play, that Monday and others, according to Henslowe, wrote a separate play under the title of "The Funeral of Richard Cordelion."

† Misprinted *Dumwod* in the old copy.

EDITION.

The Downfall of Robert Earle of Huntington, afterward called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde; with his love to chaste Matilda, the Lord Fitzwater's Daughter, afterwarde his faire Maide Marian. Acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Nottingham, Lord high Admirall of England, his servants. Imprinted at London for William Leake. 1601. 4to. B. L.

6

THE

DEATH

OF

Robert Earl of Huntington.

BY

ANTHONY MUNDAY

AND

HENRY CHETTLE.

WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS AND NOTES

BY

J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ.

LONDON:

SEPTIMUS PROWETT,

PALL MALL.

1828.

Thomas White, Printer, Johnson's Court.

THE DEATH
OF
ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

HENRY CHETTLE, who certainly joined Anthony Munday in writing *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*,* if he did not also assist in penning the *Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, was a very prolific dramatic author. Malone erroneously states, that he was the writer of, or was concerned in, thirty plays; according to information which he himself furnishes, forty-two are, either wholly or in part, to be assigned to Chettle. The titles of only twenty-five are inserted in the *Biographia Dramatica*. The proof of his connection with the historical play now reprinted, has been already supplied,† and it is derived from the same source as nearly all the rest of the intelligence regarding his works—the MSS. of Henslowe.

Of the incidents of the life of Henry Chettle absolutely nothing is known: we are ignorant of the times and places of his birth and death, and of the manner in which he obtained his education. It has been conjectured that he either was, or had been, a printer, but the

* Two lines in the Epilogue might be quoted to shew that only one author was concerned in it:

“ Thus is Matilda’s story shewn in act,
And rough-hewn out by an uncunning hand.”

But probably the assertion is not to be taken strictly; or if it be, it will not prove that Chettle had no hand, earlier or later, in the authorship. Mr. Gifford in his Introduction to Ford’s Works, Vol. 1. xvi. remarks very truly, that we are not to suppose from the combination of names of authors, “ that they were always simultaneously employed in the production of the same play;” and Munday, who was perhaps an elder poet than Chettle, may have himself originally written both parts of *The Earl of Huntington*, the connection of Chettle with them being subsequent, in making alterations or adapting them to the prevailing taste.

† See *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, p. 3.

point is very doubtful.* In a tract by him called *England's Mourning Garment*, on the Death of Queen Elizabeth, he speaks of himself as having been "young almost thirty years ago," and as having been a witness of what passed at that period in the Court. If Ritson's conjecture be well founded, he was an author as early as 1578;† but perhaps the poetical tract assigned to him under that date was the production of Henry Constable, the initials of both being the same, and the initials only attesting the authorship.

The first account we have of Chettle in connection with the stage, is under date of April 1592,‡ when, according to Henslowe, he was engaged with Dekker in writing a play called *Troilus and Cressida*; but there is good reason to infer, that if in 1603 he were "young almost thirty years ago," he had written for the theatre before 1592. Besides, in his "Kinde Harte's Dreame," produced about three months after the death of his friend, Robert Greene, on September 3d, 1592, he speaks generally of his connection with the dramatic poets of that day, as if it were not newly formed. Malone supposed, that Shakespeare, with whom Chettle had then recently become acquainted, was alluded to in the same tract. In *England's Mourning Garment*, Chettle addresses a stanza to Shakespeare, and calls him the "silver-tongued Melicert."

Francis Meres, in his often-quoted *Palladis Tamia*, (1598) includes Chettle in a long list of other writers for the stage, as "one of the best for comedy;" but in earlier works upon the poetry and literature of England, such as Webbe's *Discourse* in 1586, and Puttenham's *Art of English Poesie* in 1589, he is not mentioned.

Henslowe's list of plays, with the authors' names attached, as discovered and printed by Malone, begins only in October 1597; and there the first mention of Chet-

* See *Restituta*, II. 367. (note.)

† Bibl. Poet. 159.

‡ Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, III. 331. Probably there is some error in this date, as the preceding entry on the same subject is April 1599. If so, Henslowe's authority on this point does not carry us so far back by five years.

tle is in February 1597-8 : between that date and March 1602-3, a period of little more than five years, he wrote, or assisted in writing, all the dramatic performances with which his name is associated ; a fact of itself sufficient to shew, if Henslowe be accurate, that in many of them his share must have been very inconsiderable, perhaps only amounting to a few alterations. They are the following, exclusive of those pieces already enumerated,* in which he was concerned with Munday.

1. The Valiant Welchman, by Michael Drayton and Henry Chettle, February 1597-8 Printed in 1615.†

2. Earl Goodwin and his three Sons, Part I. by Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and Robert Wilson, March 1598. Not printed.

3. Earl Goodwin, Part II. by the same authors, and under the same date in Henslowe's papers. Not printed.

4. Piers of Exton, by the same authors, same date. Not printed.

5. Black Batman of the North, Part I. by Henry Chettle, April 1598. Not printed.

6. Black Batman of the North, Part II. by Henry Chettle and Robert Wilson. Same date. Not printed.

7. The Play of a Woman, by Henry Chettle, July 1598. Not printed.

8. The Conquest of Brute with the first finding of the Bath, by John Day, Henry Chettle, and John Singer. Same date. Not printed.

9. Hot Anger soon Cold, by Henry Porter, Henry Chettle and Ben Jonson, August 1598. Not printed.

10. Catiline's Conspiracy, by Robert Wilson and Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.

11. 'Tis no Deceit to Deceive the Deceiver, by Henry Chettle, September 1598. Not printed.

12. Æneas' Revenge, with the tragedy of Polyphemus, by Henry Chettle, February 1598-9. Not printed.

13. Agamemnon, by Henry Chettle and Thomas Dekker, June 1599. Not printed. Malone thought

* Introduction to *Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, p. 7.

† With the letters R. A. on the title-page.

that this was the same play as "Troilus and Cressida" before mentioned.

14. The Stepmother's Tragedy, by Henry Chettle, August 1599. Not printed.

15. Patient Grissel, by Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and William Haughton, December 1599. Printed in 1603.

16. The Arcadian Virgin, by Henry Chettle and William Haughton. Same date. Not printed.

17. Damon and Pythias, by Henry Chettle, January 1599-1600. Not printed.

18. The Seven Wise Masters, by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, William Haughton, and John Day, March 1599-1600. Not printed.

19. The Golden Ass and Cupid and Psyche, by Thomas Dekker, John Day, and Henry Chettle, April 1600. Not printed.

20. The Wooing of Death, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.

21. The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green, by Henry Chettle and John Day. Same date. Printed in 1659.

22. All is not Gold that Glisters, by Samuel Rowley and Henry Chettle, March 1600. Not printed.

23. Sebastian King of Portugal, by Henry Chettle and Thomas Dekker, April 1601. Not printed.

24. Cardinal Wolsey, Part I. by Henry Chettle, August 1601. Not printed.

25. Cardinal Wolsey, Part II. by Henry Chettle, May 1602. Not printed.

26. The Orphan's Tragedy, by Henry Chettle, September 1601. Not printed.

27. Too Good to be True, by Henry Chettle, Richard Hathwaye, and Wentworth Smith, November 1601. Not printed.

28. Love parts Friendship, by Henry Chettle and Wentworth Smith, May 1602. Not printed.

29. Tobias, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.

30. Jeptha, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.

31. *A Danish Tragedy*, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Not printed.

32. *Femelanco*, by Henry Chettle and — Robinson, September 1602. Not printed.

33. *Lady Jane*, Part I. by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Wentworth Smith, and John Webster, November 1602. Not printed.

34. *Lady Jane*, Part II. by the same authors, Smith excepted. Same date. Not printed.

35. *The London Florentine*, Part I. by Thomas Heywood and Henry Chettle, December 1602. Not printed.

36. *The London Florentine*, Part II. by the same authors. Same date. Not printed.

37. *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, by Henry Chettle. Same date. Printed in 1631.

38. *Jane Shore*, by Henry Chettle and John Day, March 1602-3. Not printed.

Among the scattered notices in Henslowe's papers is an entry, dated September 3d, 1599, of 40s. advanced to Chettle, Jonson, Dekker, "and other gentlemen," on account of a tragedy they were engaged upon called "*Robert the Second, King of Scots*."

The interest of the "second part" of *Robert Earl of Huntington* on the whole, is stronger than that of the first part, and some powerful, though not always tasteful, writing gives effect to the situations. The death of Robin Hood takes place as early as the end of the first act, and attention is afterwards directed to the two, otherwise unconnected, plots of the fate of Lady Bruce and her little Son, and of the love of King John for Matilda. Robert Davenport's tragedy of *King John and Matilda*, printed in 1655, goes precisely over the same ground, and with many decided marks of imitation, especially in the conduct of the story. Davenport's production is inferior in most respects to the earlier work of Chettle and Munday.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

KING RICHARD THE FIRST.

PRINCE JOHN, *afterwards King.*

ROBERT, *Earl of Huntington.*

LITTLE JOHN.

SCATHLOCK.

SCARLET.

FRIAR TUCK.

MUCH, *the Clown.*

BISHOP OF ELY.

CHESTER.

SALISBURY.

LEICESTER.

RICHMOND.

FITZWATER.

YOUNG FITZWATER.

WINCHESTER.

BRUCE.

YOUNG BRUCE.

BOY, *Son of Lady Bruce.*

OXFORD.

HUBERT.

MOWBRAY.

BONVILLE.

PRIOR OF YORK.

JUSTICE WARMAN.

SIR DONCASTER.

MONK OF BURY.

WILL BRAND.

Maskers, Messenger, Soldiers, &c.

QUEEN MOTHER.

QUEEN.

MATILDA.

LADY BRUCE.

ABBESS OF DUNMOW.

* There is no list of Characters prefixed to the old 4to.

THE DEATH
OF
ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter FRIAR TUCK.*

Friar. HOLLA, holla, holla! follow, follow, follow!
[Like noise within.]

Now, benedicite!
What foul absurdity
Folly and foolery
Had like to follow me
I and my mates,
Like addle pates,
Inviting great states
To see our last play,
Are hunting the hay,
With "ho! that way
The goodly hart, ran,"
With "follow, Little John!
Much, play the man!"
And I, like a sot,
Have wholly forgot
The course of our plot.
But cross bow lie down,
Come on, friar's gown,
Hood, cover my crown,
And with a low beck,
Prevent a sharp check.

Blithe sit ye all, and wink at our rude cry:
Mind, where we left in Sherwood merrily

* i. e. Skelton who is supposed by the author to have acted the part of Friar Tuck, and who, when first he comes on the stage, is without his gown and hood.

The king, his train, Robin, his yeomen tall,
 Gone to the wood to see the fat deer fall.
 We left maid Marian busy in the bower,
 And pretty Jenny, looking every hour
 For their returning from the hunting game,
 And therefore seek to set each thing in frame.
 Warman all woeful for his sin we left :
 Sir Doncaster, whose villainies and theft
 You never heard of, but too soon ye shall,
 Hurt with the Prior : shame them both befall !
 They two will make our mirth be short and small.
 But lest I bring ye sorrow ere the time,
 Pardon I beg of your well-judging eyne,
 And take in part bad prologue, and rude play.
 The hunter's halloo ! Tuck must needs away.

Therefore down weed,
 Bow do the deed
 To make the stag bleed ;
 And if my hand speed,
 Hey for a cry,
 With a throat strain'd high,
 And a loud yall

At the beast's fall. [*Exit. Halloo within.*]

Enter KING, ELY, FITZWATER, SALISBURY, CHESTER, PRINCE JOHN, LITTLE JOHN, SCATHLOCK.

King. Where is our mother ?

John. Mounted in a stand :

Six fallow deer have died by her hand.

Fitzwater. Three stags I slew.

Ely. Two bucks by me fell down.

Chester. As many died by me.

Salisbury. But I had three.

John. Scathlock, where's Much ?

Scathlock. When last I saw him, may it please your
 Grace,

He and the friar footed it apace.

John. Scathlock, no Grace; your fellow and plain
 John.

Little John. I warrant you, Much will be here anon.

John. Think'st thou, Little John, that he must Jenny
 wed ?

Little John. No doubt he must.

John. Then to adorn his head,
We shall have horns good store.

King. God, for thy grace,
How could I miss the stag I had in chase!
Twice did I hit him in the very neck,
When back my arrows flew, as they had smit
On some sure armour. Where is Robin Hood,
And the wight* Scarlet? Seek them Little John.

[*Exit Little John.*

I'll have that stag before I dine to-day.

Enter MUCH.

Much. Oh! the friar, the friar, the friar!

King. Why how now Much?

Much. Cry ye mercy, master King:† marry, this is the matter. Scarlet is following the stag you hit, and has almost lodged him: now, the Friar has the best bow, but yours, in all the field; which, and Scarlet had, he would have him straight.

King. Where is thy master?

Much. Nay, I cannot tell, nor the Friar neither.

Scathlock. I hear them halloo, far off in the wood.

King. Come, Much, can'st lead us where as Scarlet is?

Much. Never fear you: follow me.

[*Ereunt halloeing.*

SCENE II.

Enter Sir DONCASTER, PRIOR.

Doncaster. You were resolv'd to have him poisoned,
Or kill'd, or made away you car'd not how:
What devil makes you doubtful now to do't?

~~*Prior.* Why, Doncaster, his kindness in our needs.~~

Doncaster. A plague upon his kindness! let him die.
I never temper'd poison in my life,
But I employ'd it. By th' mass, and I lose this,
For ever look to lose my company.

Prior. But will you give it him?

* Wight means *active* or sometimes *clever*. It may be matter of conjecture whether "white boy," "white poet," "white villain," &c. so often found in old dramatists, have not this origin.

† It is very obvious that Much begins his answer at "Cry ye mercy, master king," but his name is omitted in the old 4to.

Doncaster. That cannot be.

The Queen, Earl Chester, and Earl Salisbury,
If they once see me, I am a dead man :
Or did they hear my name, I'll lay my life,
They all would hunt me for my life.

Prior. What hast thou done to them ?

Doncaster. Faith, some odd toys,
That made me fly the south : but pass we them.
Here is the poison ; will you give it Robin ?

Prior. Now, by this gold, I will.

Doncaster. Or, as I said,
For ever I'll defy your company.

Prior. Well he shall die, and in his jollity :
And in my head I have a policy,
To make him die disgrac'd.

Doncaster. Oh, tell it, prior !

Prior. I will, but not as now ; [*Call the friar within.*
We'll seek a place : the woods have many ears,
And some, methinks, are calling for the friar.*

Enter LITTLE JOHN and SCATHLOCK, *calling the Friar*
as before.

Little John. The friar ! the friar !

Scathlock. Why, where's this friar ?

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

Friar. Here, sir : what is your desire ?

Enter ROBIN HOOD, and WARMAN.†

Robin. Why Friar, what, a murrain, dost thou mean ?
The king calls for thee ; for a mighty stag,
(That hath a copper ring about his neck
With letters on it, which he would have read)
Hath Scarlet kill'd. I pray thee go thy way.

Friar. Master, I will : no longer will I stay.

[*Exit* Friar Tuck, Little John, and Scathlock.

Robin. Good uncle, be more careful of your health ;
And yours, Sir Doncaster, your wounds are green.

* The old copy adds here *exunt*, and a new scene is marked ; but this is a mistake, as Robin Hood just afterwards converses with the Prior, Sir Doncaster, and Warman, without any new entrance on their part. They retire to the back of the stage.

† Warman is not mentioned, but we find him on the stage just afterwards, and he probably enters with Robin Hood. The entrance of Friar Tuck is also omitted.

Both. Through your great kindness we are comforted.

Robin. And, Warman, I advise you to more mirth.

Shun solitary walks, keep company :

Forget your fault; I have forgiv'n the fault.

Good Warman, be more blithe, and at this time,

A little help my Marian and her maid.

Much shall come to you straight : a little now ;

We must all strive to do the best we may.

[*Exit winding.**]

Warman. On you and her I'll wait until my dying day.

[*Warman is going out ; Doncaster pulls him.*]

Doncaster. Warman, a word. My good Lord Prior
and I

Are full of grief to see thy misery.

Warman. My misery, Sir Doncaster? why, I thank
God,

I never was in better state than now.

Prior. Why, what a servile slavish mind hast thou !
Art thou a man, and canst be such a beast,
Ass-like, to bear the burthen of thy wrongs?

Warman. What wrong have I? is't wrong to be
reliev'd?

Doncaster. Reliev'd say'st thou? why, shallow-witted
fool,

Dost thou not see Robin's ambitious pride,
And how he climbs by pitying, and aspires
By humble looks, good deeds, and such fond toys,
To be a monarch reigning over us,
As if we were the vassals to his will?

Warman. I am his vassal, and I will be still.

Prior. Warman, thou art a fool. I do confess,
Were these good deeds done in sincerity,
Pity of mine, thine† or this knight's distress,
Without vain brags, it were true charity:
But to relieve our fainting body's wants,
And grieve our souls with quips, and bitter 'braids,
Is good turns overturn'd : no thanks we owe
To any, whatsoever helps us so.

* i. e. winding his horn.

† The 4to. reads "Pity of mind, thine," &c.

Warman. Neither himself nor any that he keeps,
Ever upbraided me, since I came last.

Doncaster. Oh God, have mercy on thee, silly ass!
Doth he not say to every guest that comes,
This same is Warman, that was once my steward?

Warman. And what of that?

Prior. Is't not as much to say,
Why, here he stands that once did me betray?

Doncaster. Did he not bring a troop to grace himself,
Like captives waiting on a conqueror's chair,
And calling of them out by one and one,
Presented them, like fairings, to the king?*

Prior. Oh, I: there was a rare invention.
A plague upon the fool!
I hate him worse for that than all the rest.

Warman. Why should you hate him? why should
you, or you,
Envy this noble lord thus, as you do?

Doncaster. Nay rather, why dost thou not join in hate
With us, that lately liv'd, like us, in wealthy state?
Remember this, remember, foolish man,
How thou hast been the shrieve of Nottingham.

Prior. Cry to thy thoughts, let this thought never
cease,
“ I have been justice of my sovereign's peace,
Lord of fair livings; men with cap and knee,
In liveries waited hourly on me.”

Doncaster. And when thou think'st, thou hast been
such and such,
Think, then, what 'tis to be a mate to Much?
To run when Robin bids, come at his call,
Be mistress Marian's man.

Prior. Nay think withal—

Warman. What shall I think, but think upon my need,
When men fed dogs, and me they would not feed?
When I despair'd through want, and sought to die
My piteous master of his charity
Forgave my fault, reliev'd and saved me.
This do I think upon; and you should think

* See the last scene of the first part of this play.

(If you had hope of soul's salvation)
First, Prior, that he is of thy flesh and blood,
That thou art uncle unto Robin Hood ;
That by extortion thou did'st get his lands :
God and I know how it came to thy hands.
How thou pursued'st him in his misery,
And how heaven plagued thy heart's extremity.
Think, Doncaster, when hired by this Prior,
Thou cam'st to take my master with the Friar,
And wert thyself ta'en, how he set thee free,
Gave thee an hundred pound to comfort thee.
And both bethink ye how, but yesterday
Wounded and naked in the field you lay ;
How with his own hand he did raise your heads,
Pour'd balm into your wounds, your bodies fed,
Watch'd when ye slept, wept when he saw your woe—
Doncaster. Stay, Warman, stay ! I grant that he
did so ;

And you, turn'd honest, have forsworn the villain ?

Warman. Even from my soul I villainy defy.

Prior. A blessed hour : a fit time now to die.

Doncaster. And you shall, conscience.

[*Stab him, Warman falls.*

Warman. Oh, forgive me, God,
And save my master from their bloody hands !

Prior. What, hast thou made him sure ?

Doncaster. It's dead sure he's dead, if that be sure.

Prior. Then let us thrust the dagger in his hand,
And, when the next comes, cry he kill'd himself.

Doncaster. That must he now : yonder comes Robin
Hood.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

No life in him ?

Prior. No, no, not any life.

Three mortal wounds have let in piercing air,
And at their gaps his life is clean let out.

Robin. Who is it, uncle, that you so bemoan ?

Prior. Warman, good nephew ; whom Sir Doncaster
and I

Found freshly bleeding, as he now doth lie.

You were scarce gone, when he did stab himself.

Robin. Oh God!

He in his own hand holds his own heart's hurt:

I dreaded, too, much his distressed look.

Belike the wretch despair'd and slew himself.

Doncaster. Nay that's most sure: yet he had little reason,

Considering how well you used him.

Robin. Well, I am sorry, but must not be sad,
Because the king is coming to my bower.

Help me, I pray thee, to remove his body

Lest he should come and see him murdered.

Some time anon he shall be buried.

[*Exeunt Robin Hood and Sir Doncaster with the body.**]

Prior. Good! all is good! this is as I desire:

Now for a face of pure hypocrisy.

Sweet murder, clothe thee in religious weeds,

Reign in my bosom, that with help of thee,

I may effect this Robin's tragedy.

Enter ROBIN HOOD and Sir DONCASTER.

Doncaster. Nay, nay, you must not take this thing so heavily.

Robin. A body's loss, Sir Doncaster, is much;
But a soul's too, is more to be bemoan'd.

Prior. Truly, I wonder at your virtuous mind.

Oh, God, to one so kind who'd be unkind!

Let go this grief: now must you put on joy,

And for the many favours I have found,

So much exceeding all conceit of mine,

Unto your cheer I'll add a precious drink,

Of colour rich and red, sent me from Rome.

There's in it Moly,† Syrian Balsamum,

* The 4to merely reads *exit*.

† "And yet more medicinal is it than that Moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave."

MILTON'S COMUS.

There are several kinds of Moly, and one of them distinguished among horticulturists as Homer's Moly. Sir T. Brown thus quaintly renders two lines in the *Odyssey* relating to it:—

"The Gods it Moly call, whose root to dig away
Is dangerous unto man, but Gods they all things may:"

Gold's rich elixir ; Oh, 'tis precious !

Robin. Where is it, uncle ?

Prior. As yesterday

Sir Doncaster and I rid on our way,
Thieves did beset us, bound us as you saw ;
And among other things did take from me
This rich confection : but regardlessly,
As common drink, they cast into a bush
The bottle, which this day Sir Doncaster
Fetch'd, and hath left it in the inner lodging.
I tell you cousin, (I do love you well).

A pint of this ransom'd the Sophy's son
When he was taken in Natolia.

I meant, indeed, to give it my liege lord,
In hope to have his favour ; but to you
I put myself : be my good friend,

And, in your own restoring, me restore.

Robin. Uncle, I will ; you need urge that no more.
But what's the virtue of this precious drink ?

Prior. It keeps fresh youth, restores diseased sight,
Helps nature's weakness, smooths the scars of wounds,
And cools the entrails with a balmy breath,
When they, by thirst or travel, boil with heat.

Robin. Uncle, I thank you : pray you let me have
A cup prepared 'gainst the king comes in,
To cool his heat : myself will give it him.

Prior. And when he drinks, be bold to say, he drinks
A richer draught than that dissolved pearl,
Which Cleopatra drank to Anthony.

Robin. I have much business : let it be your charge,
To make this rich draught ready for the king,
And I will quite it : pray ye do not fail. [Exit.

Prior. I warrant you, good nephew.

Doncaster. Better, and better still !
We thought before but to have poison'd him,
And now shall Robin Hood destroy the king.
Even when the king, the queen, the prince, the lords,
Joy in his virtues, this supposed vice
Will turn to sharp hate their exceeding love.

Prior. Ha, ha, ha ! I cannot chuse but laugh,

To see my cousin cozen'd in this sort.
 Fail him, quoth you ; nay, hang me if I do.
 But, Doncaster, art sure the poisons are well mix'd ?

Doncaster. Tut, tut, let me alone for the poisoning :
 I have already turn'd o'er four or five
 That anger'd me. But tell me, prior,
 Wherefore so deadly dost thou hate thy cousin ?

✓ *Prior.* Shall I be plain ? because, if he were dead,
 I should be made the Earl of Huntington.

Doncaster. A pretty cause : but thou a churchman art.

Prior. Tut, man, if that would fall,
 I'll have a dispensation, and turn temporal.
 But tell me, Doncaster, why dost thou hate him ?

Doncaster. By the mass I cannot tell. Oh, yes, now
 I ha't :

I hate thy cousin Earl of Huntington,
 Because so many love him as there do,
 And I myself am loved of so few.
 Nay, I have other reasons for my hate :
 He is a fool and will be reconcil'd,
 To any foe he hath : he is too mild,
 Too honest for this world, fitter for heaven.
 He will not kill these greedy cormorants,
 Nor strip base peasants of the wealth they have :
 He does abuse a thief's name and an outlaw's,
 And is, indeed, no outlaw, nor no thief :
 He is unworthy of such reverend names.
 Besides, he keeps a paltry whindling girl,
 And will not bed, forsooth, before he bride.

I'll stand to't, he abuses maidenhead
 ✓ That will not take it, being offered,
 Hinders the commonwealth of able men.
 Another thing I hate him for again :
 He says his prayers, fasts eves, gives alms, does good :
 For these, and such like crimes, swears Doncaster
 To work the speedy death of Robin-Hood.

Prior. Well said, i'faith. Hark, hark ! the king
 returns.

To do this deed my heart like fuel burns. [Exeunt.]

The noise of the alarm for the saint.

Wind horns. Enter KING, QUEEN, JOHN, FITZWATER, ELY, CHESTER, SALISBURY, LEICESTER, LITTLE JOHN; FRIAR TUCK, SCARLET, SCATHLOCK, and MUCH: Friar Tuck carrying a stag's head, dancing.

King. Gramercy, Friar, for thy glee,
Thou greatly hast contented me :
What with thy sporting and thy game,
I swear, I highly pleased am.

Friar. It was my master's whole desire
That maiden, yeoman, swain and friar,
Their arts and wits should all apply,
For pleasure of your majesty.

Queen. Son Richard, look, I pray you, on the ring,
That was about the neck of the last stag.

Chester. Was his name Scarlet, that shot off his neck ?

John. Chester, it was this honest fellow Scarlet :
This is the fellow, and a yeoman bold,
As ever cours'd the swift hart on the mould.

King. Friar, here's somewhat grav'd upon the ring ;
I pray thee read 'it : mean while list to me.

[*This while most compassing the Friar about the ring.*
Scarlet and Scathlock, you bold brethren,
Twelve pence a day I give each for his fee ;
And henceforth see ye live like honest men.

Both. We will, my liege, else let us die the death.

Much. A boon, a boon, upon my knee,
Good King Richard, I beg of thee !
For indeed, sir, the troth is, Much is my father, and he
is one of your tenants, in King's Mill at Wakefield, all
on a green ;

O there dwelleth a jolly pinder,
At Wakefield all on a green.*
Now I would have you, if you will do so much for me,

* These two lines are taken, with a slight change, from the ballad of
"the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield." See Ritson's Robin Hood. ii. 16.

"In Wakefield there li'es a jolly pinder,
In Wakefield all on a green," &c.

to set me forward in the way of marriage to Jenny : the mill would not be cast away upon us.

King. Much, be thou ever master of that mill :
I give it thee for thine inheritance.

Much. Thanks, precious prince of courtesy.
I'll to Jenny and tell her of my lands, i'faith. [Exit.

John. Here, Friar, here ; here it begins.

Friar. (reads) " When Harold hare-foot reigned king,
About my neck he put this ring."

King. In Harold's time ? more than a hundred year
Hath this ring been about this new-slain deer !
I am sorry now it died ; but let the same
Head, ring and all, be sent to Nottingham,
And in the castle kept for monuments.

Fitzwater. My liege, I heard an old tale long ago,
That Harold, being Goodwin's son, of Kent,*
When he had got fair England's government,
Hunted for pleasure once within this wood,
And singled out a fair and stately stag,
Which foot to foot the king in running caught :
And sure this was the stag.

King. It was, no doubt.

Chester. But some, my lord, affirm,
That Julius Cæsar, many years before,
Took such a stag, and such a poesy writ.

King. It should not be in Julius Cæsar's time.
There was no English used in this land,
Until the Saxons came ; and this is writ
In Saxon characters.

John. Well, 'twas a goodly beast.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

King. How now, Earl Robert ?

Friar. A forfeit, a forfeit, my liege Lord !
My master's laws are on record :
The court-roll here your Grace may see.

* Ritson (notes and illustrations to Robin Hood, i. lxii) observes correctly, that Fitzwater confounds one man with another, and that Harold Harefoot was the son and successor of Canute the Great.

King. I pray thee, Friar, read them me.

Friar. One shall suffice, and this is he.

No man, that cometh in this wood
To feast or dwell with Robin Hood,
Shall call him Earl, Lord, Knight or Squire :
He no such titles doth desire,
But Robin Hood, plain Robin Hood,
That honest yeoman, stout and good,
On pain of forfeiting a mark,
That must be paid to me his clerk.
My liege, my liege, this law you broke,
Almost in the last word you spoke :
That crime may not acquitted be,
Till Friar Tuck receive his fee.

King. There's more than twenty marks, mad Friar.

[Casts him purse.]

Friar. If thus you pay the clerk his hire,
Oft may you forfeit, I desire.
You are a perfect penitent,
And well you do your wrong repent :
For this your Highness' liberal gift
I here absolve you, without shrift.

King. Gramercies, friar. Now, Robin Hood,
Sith Robin Hood it needs must be,
I was about to ask before,
If thou didst see the great stag's fall.

Robin. I did, my Lord, I saw it all ;
But missing this same prating friar,
And hearing you so much desire
To have the lozel's company,
I went to seek small honesty.

Friar. But you found much, when you found me.

Robin. I, Much my man ; but not a jot
Of honesty in thee, God wot.

Queen. Robin, you do abuse the Friar.

Friar. Madam, I dare not call him liar :
He may be bold with me he knows.
How now, Prince John, how goes, how goes
This woodman's life with you to-day ?
My fellow Woodnet you would be.

The king, his train, Robin, his yeomen tall,
 Gone to the wood to see the fat deer fall.
 We left maid Marian busy in the bower,
 And pretty Jenny, looking every hour
 For their returning from the hunting game,
 And therefore seek to set each thing in frame.
 Warman all woeful for his sin we left :
 Sir Doncaster, whose villainies and theft
 You never heard of, but too soon ye shall,
 Hurt with the Prior : shame them both befall !
 They two will make our mirth be short and small.
 But lest I bring ye sorrow ere the time,
 Pardon I beg of your well-judging eyne,
 And take in part bad prologue, and rude play.
 The hunter's halloo ! Tuck must needs away.

Therefore down weed,
 Bow do the deed
 To make the stag bleed ;
 And if my hand speed,
 Hey for a cry,
 With a throat strain'd high,
 And a loud yall

At the beast's fall. [*Exit. Halloo within.*]

Enter KING, ELY, FITZWATER, SALISBURY, CHESTER, PRINCE JOHN, LITTLE JOHN, SCATHLOCK.

King. Where is our mother ?

John. Mounted in a stand :

Six fallow deer have died by her hand.

Fitzwater. Three stags I slew.

Ely. Two bucks by me fell down.

Chester. As many died by me.

Salisbury. But I had three.

John. Scathlock, where's Much ?

Scathlock. When last I saw him, may it please your
 Grace,

He and the friar footed it apace.

John. Scathlock, no Grace ; your fellow and plain
 John.

Little John. I warrant you, Much will be here anon.

John. Think'st thou, Little John, that he must Jenny,
 wed ?

Little John. No doubt he must.

John. Then to adorn his head,
We shall have horns good store.

King. God, for thy grace,
How could I miss the stag I had in chase!
Twice did I hit him in the very neck,
When back my arrows flew, as they had smit
On some sure armour. Where is Robin Hood,
And the wight* Scarlet? Seek them Little John.

[*Erit Little John.*

I'll have that stag before I dine to-day.

Enter Much.

Much. Oh! the friar, the friar, the friar!

King. Why how now Much?

Much. Cry ye mercy, master King:† marry, this is the matter. Scarlet is following the stag you hit, and has almost lodged him: now, the Friar has the best bow, but yours, in all the field; which, and Scarlet had, he would have him straight.

King. Where is thy master?

Much. Nay, I cannot tell, nor the Friar neither.

Scathlock. I hear them halloo, far off in the wood.

King. Come, Much, can'st lead us where as Scarlet is?

Much. Never fear you: follow me.

[*Exeunt halloing.*

SCENE II.

Enter Sir DONCASTER, PRIOR.

Doncaster. You were resolv'd to have him poisoned,
Or kill'd, or made away you car'd not how:
What devil makes you doubtful now to do't?

~~*Prior.* Why, Doncaster, his kindness in our needs.~~

~~*Doncaster.* A plague upon his kindness! let him die.~~
I never temper'd poison in my life,
But I employ'd it. By th' mass, and I lose this,
For ever look to lose my company.

Prior. But will you give it him?

* Wight means *active* or sometimes *clever*. It may be matter of conjecture whether "white boy," "white poet," "white villain," &c. so often found in old dramatists, have not this origin.

† It is very obvious that Much begins his answer at "Cry ye mercy, master king," but his name is omitted in the old 4to.

Doncaster. That cannot be.

The Queen, Earl Chester, and Earl Salisbury,
If they once see me, I am a dead man :
Or did they hear my name, I'll lay my life,
They all would hunt me for my life.

Prior. What hast thou done to them ?

Doncaster. Faith, some odd toys,
That made me fly the south : but pass we them.
Here is the poison ; will you give it Robin ?

Prior. Now, by this gold, I will.

Doncaster. Or, as I said,
For ever I'll defy your company.

Prior. Well he shall die, and in his jollity :
And in my head I have a policy,
To make him die disgrac'd.

Doncaster. Oh, tell it, prior !

Prior. I will, but not as now ; [*Call the friar within.*
We'll seek a place : the woods have many ears,
And some, methinks, are calling for the friar.*

Enter LITTLE JOHN *and* SCATHLOCK, *calling the Friar*
as before.

Little John. The friar ! the friar !

Scathlock. Why, where's this friar ?

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

Friar. Here, sir : what is your desire ?

Enter ROBIN HOOD, *and* WARMAN.†

Robin. Why Friar, what, a murrain, dost thou mean ?
The king calls for thee ; for a mighty stag,
(That hath a copper ring about his neck
With letters on it, which he would have read)
Hath Scarlet kill'd. I pray thee go thy way.

Friar. Master, I will : no longer will I stay.

[*Exit* Friar Tuck, Little John, and Scathlock.]

Robin. Good uncle, be more careful of your health ;
And yours, Sir Doncaster, your wounds are green.

* The old copy adds here *exunt*, and a new scene is marked ; but this is a mistake, as Robin Hood just afterwards converses with the Prior, Sir Doncaster, and Warman, without any new entrance on their part. They retire to the back of the stage.

† Warman is not mentioned, but we find him on the stage just afterwards, and he probably enters with Robin Hood. The entrance of Friar Tuck is also omitted.

Both. Through your great kindness we are comforted.

Robin. And, Warman, I advise you to more mirth.

Shun solitary walks, keep company :

Forget your fault; I have forgiv'n the fault.

Good Warman, be more blithe, and at this time,

A little help my Marian and her maid.

Much shall come to you straight : a little now ;

We must all strive to do the best we may.

[*Exit winding.**]

Warman. On you and her I'll wait until my dying day.

[*Warman is going out ; Doncaster pulls him.*]

Doncaster. Warman, a word. My good Lord Prior
and I

Are full of grief to see thy misery.

Warman. My misery, Sir Doncaster? why, I thank
God,

I never was in better state than now.

Prior. Why, what a servile slavish mind hast thou !
Art thou a man, and canst be such a beast,
Ass-like, to bear the burthen of thy wrongs ?

Warman. What wrong have I? is't wrong to be
reliev'd ?

Doncaster. Reliev'd say'st thou? why, shallow-witted
fool,

Dost thou not see Robin's ambitious pride,
And how he climbs by pitying, and aspires
By humble looks, good deeds, and such fond toys,
To be a monarch reigning over us,
As if we were the vassals to his will ?

Warman. I am his vassal, and I will be still.

Prior. Warman, thou art a fool. I do confess,
Were these good deeds done in sincerity,
Pity of mine, thine† or this knight's distress,
Without vain brags, it were true charity :
But to relieve our fainting body's wants,
And grieve our souls with quips, and bitter 'braids,
Is good turns overturn'd : no thanks we owe
To any, whatsoever helps us so.

* i. e. winding his horn.

† The 4to. reads "Pity of mind, thine," &c.

Warman. Neither himself nor any that he keeps,
Ever upbraided me, since I came last.

Doncaster. Oh God, have mercy on thee, silly ass!
Doth he not say to every guest that comes,
This same is Warman, that was once my steward?

Warman. And what of that?

Prior. Is't not as much to say,
Why, here he stands that once did me betray?

Doncaster. Did he not bring a troop to grace himself,
Like captives waiting on a conqueror's chair,
And calling of them out by one and one,
Presented them, like fairings, to the king?*

Prior. Oh, I: there was a rare invention.
A plague upon the fool!
I hate him worse for that than all the rest.

Warman. Why should you hate him? why should
you, or you,
Envy this noble lord thus, as you do?

Doncaster. Nay rather, why dost thou not join in hate
With us, that lately liv'd, like us, in wealthy state?
Remember this, remember, foolish man,
How thou hast been the shrieve of Nottingham.

Prior. Cry to thy thoughts, let this thought never
cease,
“I have been justice of my sovereign's peace,
Lord of fair livings; men with cap and knee,
In liveries waited hourly on me.”

Doncaster. And when thou think'st, thou hast been
such and such,
Think, then, what 'tis to be a mate to Much?
To run when Robin bids, come at his call,
Be mistress Marian's man.

Prior. Nay think withal—

Warman. What shall I think, but think upon my need,
When men fed dogs, and me they would not feed?
When I despair'd through want, and sought to die
My piteous master of his charity
Forgave my fault, reliev'd and saved me.
This do I think upon; and you should think

* See the last scene of the first part of this play.

(If you had hope of soul's salvation)
First, Prior, that he is of thy flesh and blood,
That thou art uncle unto Robin Hood;
That by extortion thou did'st get his lands:
God and I know how it came to thy hands.
How thou pursued'st him in his misery,
And how heaven plagued thy heart's extremity.
Think, Doncaster, when hired by this Prior,
Thou cam'st to take my master with the Friar,
And wert thyself ta'en, how he set thee free,
Gave thee an hundred pound to comfort thee.
And both bethink ye how, but yesterday
Wounded and naked in the field you lay;
How with his own hand he did raise your heads,
Pour'd balm into your wounds, your bodies fed,
Watch'd when ye slept, wept when he saw your woe—

Doncaster. Stay, Warman, stay! I grant that he
did so;

And you, turn'd honest, have forsworn the villain?

Warman. Even from my soul I villainy defy.

Prior. A blessed hour: a fit time now to die.

Doncaster. And you shall, conscience.

[*Stab him, Warman falls.*]

Warman. Oh, forgive me, God,
And save my master from their bloody hands!

Prior. What, hast thou made him sure?

Doncaster. It's dead sure he's dead, if that be sure.

Prior. Then let us thrust the dagger in his hand,
And, when the next comes, cry he kill'd himself.

Doncaster. That must he now: yonder comes Robin
Hood.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

No life in him?

Prior. No, no, not any life.

Three mortal wounds have let in piercing air,
And at their gaps his life is clean let out.

Robin. Who is it, uncle, that you so bemoan?

Prior. Warman, good nephew; whom Sir Doncaster
and I

Found freshly bleeding, as he now doth lie.

You were scarce gone, when he did stab himself.

Robin. Oh God!

He in his own hand holds his own heart's hurt:

I dreaded, too, much his distressed look.

Belike the wretch despair'd and slew himself.

Doncaster. Nay that's most sure: yet he had little reason,

Considering how well you used him.

Robin. Well, I am sorry, but must not be sad,

Because the king is coming to my bower.

Help me, I pray thee, to remove his body

Lest he should come and see him murdered.

Some time anon he shall be buried.

[Exeunt Robin Hood and Sir Doncaster with the body.]*

Prior. Good! all is good! this is as I desire:

Now for a face of pure hypocrisy.

Sweet murder, clothe thee in religious weeds,

Reign in my bosom, that with help of thee,

I may effect this Robin's tragedy.

Enter ROBIN HOOD and Sir DONCASTER.

Doncaster. Nay, nay, you must not take this thing so heavily.

Robin. A body's loss, Sir Doncaster, is much;
But a soul's too, is more to be bemoan'd.

Prior. Truly, I wonder at your virtuous mind.

Oh, God, to one so kind who'd be unkind!

Let go this grief: now must you put on joy,

And for the many favours I have found,

So much exceeding all conceit of mine,

Unto your cheer I'll add a precious drink,

Of colour rich and red, sent me from Rome.

There's in it Moly,† Syrian Balsamum,

* The 4to merely reads *exit*.

† "And yet more medicinal is it than that Moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave."

MILTON'S COMUS.

There are several kinds of Moly, and one of them distinguished among horticulturists as Homer's Moly. Sir T. Brown thus quaintly renders two lines in the *Odyssey* relating to it:—

"The Gods it Moly call, whose root to dig away
Is dangerous unto man, but Gods they all things may."

Gold's rich elixir ; Oh, 'tis precious !

Robin. Where is it, uncle ?

Prior. As yesterday

Sir Doncaster and I rid on our way,

Thieves did beset us, bound us as you saw ;

And among other things did take from me

This rich confection : but regardlessly,

As common drink, they cast into a bush

The bottle, which this day Sir Doncaster

Fetch'd, and hath left it in the inner lodging.

I tell you cousin, (I do love you well).

A pint of this ransom'd the Sophy's son

When he was taken in Natolia.

I meant, indeed, to give it my liege lord,

In hope to have his favour ; but to you

I put myself : be my good friend,

And, in your own restoring, me restore.

Robin. Uncle, I will ; you need urge that no more.

But what's the virtue of this precious drink ?

Prior. It keeps fresh youth, restores diseased sight,

Helps nature's weakness, smooths the scars of wounds,

And cools the entrails with a balmy breath,

When they, by thirst or travel, boil with heat.

Robin. Uncle, I thank you : pray you let me have

A cup prepared 'gainst the king comes in,

To cool his heat : myself will give it him.

Prior. And when he drinks, be bold to say, he drinks

A richer draught than that dissolved pearl,

Which Cleopatra drank to Anthony.

Robin. I have much business : let it be your charge,

To make this rich draught ready for the king,

And I will quite it : pray ye do not fail.

[Exit.

Prior. I warrant you, good nephew.

Doncaster. Better, and better still !

We thought before but to have poison'd him,

And now shall Robin Hood destroy the king.

Even when the king, the queen, the prince, the lords,

Joy in his virtues, this supposed vice

Will turn to sharp hate their exceeding love.

Prior. Ha, ha, ha ! I cannot chuse but laugh,

To see my cousin cozen'd in this sort.
Fail him, quoth you; nay, hang me if I do.
But, Doncaster, art sure the poisons are well mix'd?

Doncaster. Tut, tut, let me alone for the poisoning:
I have already turn'd o'er four or five
That anger'd me. But tell me, prior,
Wherefore so deadly dost thou hate thy cousin?

✓ *Prior.* Shall I be plain? because, if he were dead,
I should be made the Earl of Huntington.

Doncaster. A pretty cause: but thou a churchman art.

Prior. Tut, man, if that would fall,
I'll have a dispensation, and turn temporal.
But tell me, Doncaster, why dost thou hate him?

Doncaster. By the mass I cannot tell. Oh, yes, now
I ha't:

I hate thy cousin Earl of Huntington,
Because so many love him as there do,
And I myself am loved of so few.
Nay, I have other reasons for my hate:
He is a fool and will be reconcil'd,
To any foe he hath: he is too mild,
Too honest for this world, fitter for heaven.
He will not kill these greedy cormorants,
Nor strip base peasants of the wealth they have:
He does abuse a thief's name and an outlaw's,
And is, indeed, no outlaw, nor no thief:
He is unworthy of such reverend names.
Besides, he keeps a paltry whindling girl,
And will not bed, forsooth, before he bride.
I'll stand to't, he abuses maidenhead

✓ That will not take it, being offered,
Hinders the commonwealth of able men.

Another thing I hate him for again:

He says his prayers, fasts eves, gives alms, does good:
For these, and such like crimes, swears Doncaster
To work the speedy death of Robin Hood.

Prior. Well said, i'faith. Hark, hark! the king
returns.

To do this deed my heart like fuel burns.

[Exeunt.]

He is unworthy of such reverend names.

Wind horns. Enter KING, QUEEN, JOHN, FITZWATER, ELY, CHESTER, SALISBURY, LEICESTER, LITTLE JOHN, FRIAR TUCK, SCARLET, SCATHLOCK, and MUCH: Friar Tuck carrying a stag's head, dancing.

King. Gramercy, Friar, for thy glee,
Thou greatly hast contented me :
What with thy sporting and thy game,
I swear, I highly pleased am.

Friar. It was my master's whole desire
That maiden, yeoman, swain and friar,
Their arts and wits should all apply,
For pleasure of your majesty.

Queen. Son Richard, look, I pray you, on the ring,
That was about the neck of the last stag.

Chester. Was his name Scarlet, that shot off his neck ?

John. Chester, it was this honest fellow Scarlet :
This is the fellow, and a yeoman bold,
As ever cours'd the swift hart on the mould.

King. Friar, here's somewhat grav'd upon the ring ;
I pray thee read' it : mean while list to me.

[*This while most compassing the Friar about the ring.*
Scarlet and Scathlock, you bold brethren,
Twelve pence a day I give each for his fee ;
And henceforth see ye live like honest men.

Both. We will, my liege, else let us die the death.

Much. A boon, a boon, upon my knee,
Good King Richard, I beg of thee !
For indeed, sir, the troth is, Much is my father, and he
is one of your tenants, in King's Mill at Wakefield, all
on a green ;

O there dwelleth a jolly pinder,
At Wakefield all on a green.*

Now I would have you, if you will do so much for me,

* These two lines are taken, with a slight change, from the ballad of
"the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield." See Ritson's Robin Hood. ii. 16.

"In Wakefield there li'es a jolly pinder,
In Wakefield all on a green," &c.

to set me forward in the way of marriage to Jenny : the mill would not be cast away upon us.

King. Much, be thou ever master of that mill : I give it thee for thine inheritance.

Much. Thanks, precious prince of courtesy. I'll to Jenny and tell her of my lands, i'faith. [Exit.

John. Here, Friar, here ; here it begins.

Friar. (reads) " When Harold hare-foot reigned king,
About my neck he put this ring."

King. In Harold's time ? more than a hundred year Hath this ring been about this new-slain deer ! I am sorry now it died ; but let the same Head, ring and all, be sent to Nottingham, And in the castle kept for monuments.

Fitzwater. My liege, I heard an old tale long ago, That Harold, being Goodwin's son, of Kent,* When he had got fair England's government, Hunted for pleasure once within this wood, And singled out a fair and stately stag, Which foot to foot the king in running caught : And sure this was the stag.

King. It was, no doubt.

Chester. But some, my lord, affirm, That Julius Cæsar, many years before, Took such a stag, and such a poesy writ.

King. It should not be in Julius Cæsar's time. There was no English used in this land, Until the Saxons came ; and this is writ In Saxon characters.

John. Well, 'twas a goodly beast.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

King. How now, Earl Robert ?

Friar. A forfeit, a forfeit, my liege Lord ! My master's laws are on record : The court-roll here your Grace may see.

* Ritson (notes and illustrations to Robin Hood, i. lxii) observes correctly, that Fitzwater confounds one man with another, and that Harold Harefoot was the son and successor of Canute the Great.

King. I pray thee, Friar, read them me.

Friar. One shall suffice, and this is he.

No man, that cometh in this wood
To feast or dwell with Robin Hood,
Shall call him Earl, Lord, Knight or Squire :
He no such titles doth desire,
But Robin Hood, plain Robin Hood,
That honest yeoman, stout and good,
On pain of forfeiting a mark,
That must be paid to me his clerk.
My liege, my liege, this law you broke,
Almost in the last word you spoke :
That crime may not acquitted be,
Till Friar Tuck receive his fee.

King. There's more than twenty marks, mad Friar.

[Casts him purse.

Friar. If thus you pay the clerk his hire,
Oft may you forfeit, I desire.

You are a perfect penitent,
And well you do your wrong repent :
For this your Highness' liberal gift
I here absolve you, without shrift.

King. Gramercies, friar. Now, Robin Hood,
Sith Robin Hood it needs must be,
I was about to ask before,
If thou didst see the great stag's fall.

Robin. I did, my Lord, I saw it all ;
But missing this same prating friar,
And hearing you so much desire
To have the lozel's company,
I went to seek small honesty.

Friar. But you found much, when you found me.

Robin. I, Much my man ; but not a jot
Of honesty in thee, God wot.

Queen. Robin, you do abuse the Friar.

Friar. Madam, I dare not call him liar :
He may be bold with me he knows.
How now, Prince John, how goes, how goes
This woodman's life with you to-day ?
My fellow Woodnet you would be.

The king, his train, Robin, his yeomen tall,
 Gone to the wood to see the fat deer fall.
 We left maid Marian busy in the bower,
 And pretty Jenny, looking every hour
 For their returning from the hunting game,
 And therefore seek to set each thing in frame.
 Warman all woeful for his sin we left :
 Sir Doncaster, whose villainies and theft
 You never heard of, but too soon ye shall,
 Hurt with the Prior : shame them both befall !
 They two will make our mirth be short and small.
 But lest I bring ye sorrow ere the time,
 Pardon I beg of your well-judging eyne,
 And take in part bad prologue, and rude play.
 The hunter's halloo ! Tuck must needs away.

Therefore down weed,
 Bow do the deed
 To make the stag bleed ;
 And if my hand speed,
 Hey for a cry,
 With a throat strain'd high,
 And a loud yall

At the beast's fall. [*Exit. Halloo within.*]

Enter KING, ELY, FITZWATER, SALISBURY, CHESTER, PRINCE JOHN, LITTLE JOHN, SCATHLOCK.

King. Where is our mother ?

John. Mounted in a stand :

Six fallow deer have died by her hand.

Fitzwater. Three stags I slew.

Ely. Two bucks by me fell down.

Chester. As many died by me.

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John. Scathlock, where's Much ?

Scathlock. When last I saw him, may it please your
 Grace,

He and the friar footed it apace.

John. Scathlock, no Grace ; your fellow and plain
 John.

Little John. I warrant you, Much will be here anon.

John. Think'st thou, Little John, that he must Jenny
 wed ?

Little John. No doubt he must.

John. Then to adorn his head,
We shall have horns good store.

King. God, for thy grace,
How could I miss the stag I had in chase!
Twice did I hit him in the very neck,
When back my arrows flew, as they had smit
On some sure armour. Where is Robin Hood,
And the wight* Scarlet? Seek them Little John.

[*Erit Little John.*

I'll have that stag before I dine to-day.

Enter Much.

Much. Oh! the friar, the friar, the friar!

King. Why how now Much?

Much. Cry ye mercy, master King:† marry, this is the matter. Scarlet is following the stag you hit, and has almost lodged him: now, the Friar has the best bow, but yours, in all the field; which, and Scarlet had, he would have him straight.

King. Where is thy master?

Much. Nay, I cannot tell, nor the Friar neither.

Scathlock. I hear them halloo, far off in the wood.

King. Come, Much, can'st lead us where as Scarlet is?

Much. Never fear you: follow me.

[*Exeunt halloeing.*

SCENE II.

Enter Sir DONCASTER, PRIOR.

Doncaster. You were resolv'd to have him poisoned,
Or kill'd, or made away you car'd not how:
What devil makes you doubtful now to do't?

~~*Prior.* Why, Doncaster, his kindness in our needs.~~

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But I employ'd it. By th' mass, and I lose this,
For ever look to lose my company.

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If they once see me, I am a dead man :
Or did they hear my name, I'll lay my life,
They all would hunt me for my life.

Prior. What hast thou done to them ?

Doncaster. Faith, some odd toys,
That made me fly the south : but pass we them.
Here is the poison ; will you give it Robin ?

Prior. Now, by this gold, I will.

Doncaster. Or, as I said,
For ever I'll defy your company.

Prior. Well he shall die, and in his jollity :
And in my head I have a policy,
To make him die disgrac'd.

Doncaster. Oh, tell it, prior !

Prior. I will, but not as now ; [*Call the friar within.*
We'll seek a place : the woods have many ears,
And some, methinks, are calling for the friar.*

Enter LITTLE JOHN *and* SCATHLOCK, *calling the Friar*
as before.

Little John. The friar ! the friar !

Scathlock. Why, where's this friar ?

Enter FRIAR TUCK.

Friar. Here, sir : what is your desire ?

Enter ROBIN HOOD, *and* WARMAN.†

Robin. Why Friar, what, a murrain, dost thou mean ?
The king calls for thee ; for a mighty stag,
(That hath a copper ring about his neck
With letters on it, which he would have read)
Hath Scarlet kill'd. I pray thee go thy way.

Friar. Master, I will : no longer will I stay.

[*Exit* Friar Tuck, *Little John,* *and* *Scathlock.*

Robin. Good uncle, be more careful of your health ;
And yours, Sir Doncaster, your wounds are green.

* The old copy adds here *exunt*, and a new scene is marked ; but this is a mistake, as Robin Hood just afterwards converses with the Prior, Sir Doncaster, and Warman, without any new entrance on their part. They retire to the back of the stage.

† Warman is not mentioned, but we find him on the stage just afterwards, and he probably enters with Robin Hood. The entrance of Friar Tuck is also omitted.

Both. Through your great kindness we are comforted.

Robin. And, Warman, I advise you to more mirth.

Shun solitary walks, keep company :

Forget your fault; I have forgiv'n the fault.

Good Warman, be more blithe, and at this time,

A little help my Marian and her maid.

Much shall come to you straight : a little now ;

We must all strive to do the best we may.

[*Exit winding.**]

Warman. On you and her I'll wait until my dying day.

[*Warman is going out ; Doncaster pulls him.*]

Doncaster. Warman, a word. My good Lord Prior
and I

Are full of grief to see thy misery.

Warman. My misery, Sir Doncaster? why, I thank
God,

I never was in better state than now.

Prior. Why, what a servile slavish mind hast thou !
Art thou a man, and canst be such a beast,
Ass-like, to bear the burthen of thy wrongs?

Warman. What wrong have I? is't wrong to be
reliev'd?

Doncaster. Reliev'd say'st thou? why, shallow-witted
fool,

Dost thou not see Robin's ambitious pride,
And how he climbs by pitying, and aspires
By humble looks, good deeds, and such fond toys,
To be a monarch reigning over us,
As if we were the vassals to his will?

Warman. I am his vassal, and I will be still.

Prior. Warman, thou art a fool. I do confess,
Were these good deeds done in sincerity,
Pity of mine, thine† or this knight's distress,
Without vain brags, it were true charity:
But to relieve our fainting body's wants,
And grieve our souls with quips, and bitter 'braids,
Is good turns overturn'd : no thanks we owe
To any, whatsoever helps us so.

* i. e. winding his horn.

† The 4to. reads "Pity of mind, thine," &c.

Warman. Neither himself nor any that he keeps,
Ever upbraided me, since I came last.

Doncaster. Oh God, have mercy on thee, silly ass!
Doth he not say to every guest that comes,
This same is Warman, that was once my steward?

Warman. And what of that?

Prior. Is't not as much to say,
Why, here he stands that once did me betray?

Doncaster. Did he not bring a troop to grace himself,
Like captives waiting on a conqueror's chair,
And calling of them out by one and one,
Presented them, like fairings, to the king?*

Prior. Oh, I: there was a rare invention.
A plague upon the fool!
I hate him worse for that than all the rest.

Warman. Why should you hate him? why should
you, or you,
Envy this noble lord thus, as you do?

Doncaster. Nay rather, why dost thou not join in hate
With us, that lately liv'd, like us, in wealthy state?
Remember this, remember, foolish man,
How thou hast been the shrieve of Nottingham.

Prior. Cry to thy thoughts, let this thought never
cease,
"I have been justice of my sovereign's peace,
Lord of fair livings; men with cap and knee,
In liveries waited hourly on me."

Doncaster. And when thou think'st, thou hast been
such and such,
Think, then, what 'tis to be a mate to Much?
To run when Robin bids, come at his call,
Be mistress Marian's man.

Prior. Nay think withal—

Warman. What shall I think, but think upon my need,
When men fed dogs, and me they would not feed?
When I despair'd through want, and sought to die
My piteous master of his charity
Forgave my fault, reliev'd and saved me.
This do I think upon; and you should think

* See the last scene of the first part of this play.

(If you had hope of soul's salvation)
First, Prior, that he is of thy flesh and blood,
That thou art uncle unto Robin Hood;
That by extortion thou did'st get his lands:
God and I know how it came to thy hands.
How thou pursued'st him in his misery,
And how heaven plagued thy heart's extremity.
Think, Doncaster, when hired by this Prior,
Thou cam'st to take my master with the Friar,
And wert thyself ta'en, how he set thee free,
Gave thee an hundred pound to comfort thee.
And both bethink ye how, but yesterday
Wounded and naked in the field you lay;
How with his own hand he did raise your heads,
Pour'd balm into your wounds, your bodies fed,
Watch'd when ye slept, wept when he saw your woe—

Doncaster. Stay, Warman, stay! I grant that he
did so;

And you, turn'd honest, have forsworn the villain?

Warman. Even from my soul I villainy defy.

Prior. A blessed hour: a fit time now to die.

Doncaster. And you shall, conscience.

[*Stab him, Warman falls.*]

Warman. Oh, forgive me, God,

And save my master from their bloody hands!

Prior. What, hast thou made him sure?

Doncaster. It's dead sure he's dead, if that be sure.

Prior. Then let us thrust the dagger in his hand,
And, when the next comes, cry he kill'd himself.

Doncaster. That must he now: yonder comes Robin
Hood.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

No life in him?

Prior. No, no, not any life.

Three mortal wounds have let in piercing air,
And at their gaps his life is clean let out.

Robin. Who is it, uncle, that you so bemoan?

Prior. Warman, good nephew; whom Sir Doncaster
and I

Found freshly bleeding, as he now doth lie.

You were scarce gone, when he did stab himself.

Robin. Oh God!

He in his own hand holds his own heart's hurt:

I dreaded, too, much his distressed look.

Belike the wretch despair'd and slew himself.

Doncaster. Nay that's most sure: yet he had little reason,

Considering how well you used him.

Robin. Well, I am sorry, but must not be sad,

Because the king is coming to my bower.

Help me, I pray thee, to remove his body

Lest he should come and see him murdered.

Some time anon he shall be buried.

[Exeunt Robin Hood and Sir Doncaster with the body.]*

Prior. Good! all is good! this is as I desire:

Now for a face of pure hypocrisy.

Sweet murder, clothe thee in religious weeds,

Reign in my bosom, that with help of thee,

I may effect this Robin's tragedy.

Enter ROBIN HOOD and Sir DONCASTER.

Doncaster. Nay, nay, you must not take this thing so heavily.

Robin. A body's loss, Sir Doncaster, is much;
But a soul's too, is more to be bemoan'd.

Prior. Truly, I wonder at your virtuous mind.

Oh, God, to one so kind who'd be unkind!

Let go this grief: now must you put on joy,

And for the many favours I have found,

So much exceeding all conceit of mine,

Unto your cheer I'll add a precious drink,

Of colour rich and red, sent me from Rome.

There's in it Moly,† Syrian Balsamum,

* The 4to merely reads *exit*.

† "And yet more medicinal is it than that Moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave."

MILTON'S COMUS.

There are several kinds of Moly, and one of them distinguished among horticulturists as Homer's Moly. Sir T. Brown thus quaintly renders two lines in the *Odyssey* relating to it:—

"The Gods it Moly call, whose root to dig away
Is dangerous unto man, but Gods they all things may:"

Gold's rich elixir ; Oh, 'tis precious !

Robin. Where is it, uncle ?

Prior. As yesterday

Sir Doncaster and I rid on our way,
Thieves did beset us, bound us as you saw ;
And among other things did take from me
This rich confection : but regardlessly,
As common drink, they cast into a bush
The bottle, which this day Sir Doncaster
Fetch'd, and hath left it in the inner lodging.
I tell you cousin, (I do love you well).
A pint of this ransom'd the Sophy's son
When he was taken in Natolia.
I meant, indeed, to give it my liege lord,
In hope to have his favour ; but to you
I put myself : be my good friend,
And, in your own restoring, me restore.

Robin. Uncle, I will ; you need urge that no more.
But what's the virtue of this precious drink ?

Prior. It keeps fresh youth, restores diseased sight,
Helps nature's weakness, smooths the scars of wounds,
And cools the entrails with a balmy breath,
When they, by thirst or travel, boil with heat.

Robin. Uncle, I thank you : pray you let me have
A cup prepared 'gainst the king comes in,
To cool his heat : myself will give it him.

Prior. And when he drinks, be bold to say, he drinks
A richer draught than that dissolved pearl,
Which Cleopatra drank to Anthony.

Robin. I have much business : let it be your charge,
To make this rich draught ready for the king,
And I will quite it : pray ye do not fail. [Exit.

Prior. I warrant you, good nephew.

Doncaster. Better, and better still !
We thought before but to have poison'd him,
And now shall Robin Hood destroy the king.
Even when the king, the queen, the prince, the lords,
Joy in his virtues, this supposed vice
Will turn to sharp hate their exceeding love.

Prior. Ha, ha, ha ! I cannot chuse but laugh,

To see my cousin cozen'd in this sort.
Fail him, quoth you; nay, hang me if I do.
But, Doncaster, art sure the poisons are well mix'd?

Doncaster. Tut, tut, let me alone for the poisoning:
I have already turn'd o'er four or five
That anger'd me. But tell me, prior,
Wherefore so deadly dost thou hate thy cousin?

✓ *Prior.* Shall I be plain? because, if he were dead,
I should be made the Earl of Huntington.

Doncaster. A pretty cause: but thou a churchman art.

Prior. Tut, man, if that would fall,
I'll have a dispensation, and turn temporal.
But tell me, Doncaster, why dost thou hate him?

Doncaster. By the mass I cannot tell. Oh, yes, now
I ha't:

I hate thy cousin Earl of Huntington,
Because so many love him as there do,
And I myself am loved of so few.
Nay, I have other reasons for my hate:
He is a fool and will be reconcil'd,
To any foe he hath: he is too mild,
Too honest for this world, fitter for heaven.
He will not kill these greedy cormorants,
Nor strip base peasants of the wealth they have:
He does abuse a thief's name and an outlaw's,
And is, indeed, no outlaw, nor no thief:
He is unworthy of such reverend names.
Besides, he keeps a paltry whindling girl,
And will not bed, forsooth, before he bride.

I'll stand to't, he abuses maidenhead
✓ That will not take it, being offered,
Hinders the commonwealth of able men.

Another thing I hate him for again:

He says his prayers, fasts eves, gives alms, does good:
For these, and such like crimes, swears Doncaster
To work the speedy death of Robin-Hood.

Prior. Well-said, i'faith. Hark, hark! the king
returns.

To do this deed my heart like fuel burns.

[*Exeunt.*]

The king is dead / the Saint

Wind horns. Enter KING, QUEEN, JOHN, FITZWATER, ELY, CHESTER, SALISBURY, LEICESTER, LITTLE JOHN, FRIAR TUCK, SCARLET, SCATHLOCK, and MUCH: Friar Tuck carrying a stag's head, dancing.

King. Gramercy, Friar, for thy glee,
Thou greatly hast contented me :
What with thy sporting and thy game,
I swear, I highly pleased am.

Friar. It was my master's whole desire
That maiden, yeoman, swain and friar,
Their arts and wits should all apply,
For pleasure of your majesty.

Queen. Son Richard, look, I pray you, on the ring,
That was about the neck of the last stag.

Chester. Was his name Scarlet, that shot off his neck ?

John. Chester, it was this honest fellow Scarlet :
This is the fellow, and a yeoman bold,
As ever cours'd the swift hart on the mould.

King. Friar, here's somewhat grav'd upon the ring ;
I pray thee read' it : mean while list to me.

[*This while most compassing the Friar about the ring.*
Scarlet and Scathlock, you bold brethren,
Twelve pence a day I give each for his fee ;
And henceforth see ye live like honest men.

Both. We will, my liege, else let us die the death.

Much. A boon, a boon, upon my knee,
Good King Richard, I beg of thee !
For indeed, sir, the troth is, Much is my father, and he
is one of your tenants, in King's Mill at Wakefield, all
on a green ;

O there dwelleth a jolly pinder,
At Wakefield all on a green.*

Now I would have you, if you will do so much for me,

* These two lines are taken, with a slight change, from the ballad of
"the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield." See Ritson's Robin Hood. ii. 16.

"In Wakefield there li'es a jolly pinder,
In Wakefield all on a green," &c.

to set me forward in the way of marriage to Jenny : the mill would not be cast away upon us.

King. Much, be thou ever master of that mill : I give it thee for thine inheritance.

Much. Thanks, precious prince of courtesy. I'll to Jenny and tell her of my lands, i'faith. [Exit.]

John. Here, Friar, here ; here it begins.

Friar. (reads) " When Harold hare-foot reigned king,
About my neck he put this ring."

King. In Harold's time ? more than a hundred year
Hath this ring been about this new-slain deer !
I am sorry now it died ; but let the same
Head, ring and all, be sent to Nottingham,
And in the castle kept for monuments.

Fitzwater. My liege, I heard an old tale long ago,
That Harold, being Goodwin's son, of Kent,*
When he had got fair England's government,
Hunted for pleasure once within this wood,
And singled out a fair and stately stag,
Which foot to foot the king in running caught :
And sure this was the stag.

King. It was, no doubt.

Chester. But some, my lord, affirm,
That Julius Cæsar, many years before,
Took such a stag, and such a poesy writ.

King. It should not be in Julius Cæsar's time.
There was no English used in this land,
Until the Saxons came ; and this is writ
In Saxon characters.

John. Well, 'twas a goodly beast.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

King. How now, Earl Robert ?

Friar. A forfeit, a forfeit, my liege Lord !
My master's laws are on record :
The court-roll here your Grace may see.

* Ritson (notes and illustrations to Robin Hood, i. lxii) observes correctly, that Fitzwater confounds one man with another, and that Harold Harefoot was the son and successor of Canute the Great.

King. I pray thee, Friar, read them me.

Friar. One shall suffice, and this is he.

No man, that cometh in this wood
To feast or dwell with Robin Hood,
Shall call him Earl, Lord, Knight or Squire :
He no such titles doth desire,
But Robin Hood, plain Robin Hood,
That honest yeoman, stout and good,
On pain of forfeiting a mark,
That must be paid to me his clerk.
My liege, my liege, this law you broke,
Almost in the last word you spoke :
That crime may not acquitted be,
Till Friar Tuck receive his fee.

King. There's more than twenty marks, mad Friar.

[Casts him purse.]

Friar. If thus you pay the clerk his hire,
Oft may you forfeit, I desire.
You are a perfect penitent,
And well you do your wrong repent :
For this your Highness' liberal gift
I here absolve you, without shrift.

King. Gramercies, friar. Now, Robin Hood,
Sith Robin Hood it needs must be,
I was about to ask before,
If thou didst see the great stag's fall.

Robin. I did, my Lord, I saw it all ;
But missing this same prating friar,
And hearing you so much desire
To have the lozel's company,
I went to seek small honesty.

Friar. But you found much, when you found me.

Robin. I, Much my man ; but not a jot
Of honesty in thee, God wot.

Queen. Robin, you do abuse the Friar.

Friar. Madam, I dare not call him liar :
He may be bold with me he knows.
How now, Prince John, how goes, how goes
This woodman's life with you to-day ?
My fellow Woodnet you would be.

Warman. Neither himself nor any that he keeps,
Ever upbraided me, since I came last.

Doncaster. Oh God, have mercy on thee, silly ass!
Doth he not say to every guest that comes,
This same is Warman, that was once my steward?

Warman. And what of that?

Prior. Is't not as much to say,
Why, here he stands that once did me betray?

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Some time anon he shall be buried.

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among other things did take from me
such confection : but regardlessly,
common drink, they cast into a bush
in a bottle, which this day Sir Doncaster
found, and hath left it in the inner lodging.
You cousin, (I do love you well).

Of this ransom'd the Sophy's son
he was taken in Natolia.

Went, indeed, to give it my liege lord,
to have his favour ; but to you
myself : be my good friend,
in your own restoring, me restore.

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What's the virtue of this precious drink ?

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now shall Robin Hood destroy the king.

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his virtues, this supposed vice
turn to sharp hate their exceeding love.

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Handwritten:
The plot
to poison
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 And will not bed, forsooth, before he bride.

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[*Exeunt.*]

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For indeed, sir, the troth is, Much is my father, and he
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About my neck he put this ring."

King. In Harold's time ? more than a hundred years
Hath this ring been about this new-slain deer !
I am sorry now it died ; but let the same
Head, ring and all, be sent to Nottingham,
And in the castle kept for monuments.

Fitzwater. My liege, I heard an old tale long ago,
That Harold, being Goodwin's son, of Kent,*
When he had got fair England's government,
Hunted for pleasure once within this wood,
And singled out a fair and stately stag,
Which foot to foot the king in running caught :
And sure this was the stag.

King. It was, no doubt.

Chester. But some, my lord, affirm,
That Julius Cæsar, many years before,
Took such a stag, and such a poesy writ.

King. It should not be in Julius Cæsar's time.
There was no English used in this land,
Until the Saxons came ; and this is writ
In Saxon characters.

John. Well, 'twas a goodly beast.

Enter ROBIN HOOD.

King. How now, Earl Robert ?

Friar. A forfeit, a forfeit, my liege Lord !
My master's laws are on record :
The court-roll here your Grace may see.

* Ritson (notes and illustrations to Robin Hood, i. serves correctly, that Fitzwater confounds one man with another, that Harold Harefoot was the son and successor of Canute !

King. I pray thee, Friar, read them me.

Friar. One shall suffice, and this is he.

**No man, that cometh in this wood
To feast or dwell with Robin Hood,
Shall call him Earl, Lord, Knight or Squire :
He no such titles doth desire,
But Robin Hood, plain Robin Hood,
That honest yeoman, stout and good,
On pain of forfeiting a mark,
That must be paid to me his clerk.
My liege, my liege, this law you broke,
Almost in the last word you spoke :
That crime may not acquitted be,
Till Friar Tuck receive his fee.**

King. There's more than twenty marks, mad Friar.

[Casts him purse.]

Friar. If thus you pay the clerk his hire,
Oft may you forfeit, I desire.
You are a perfect penitent,
And well you do your wrong repent :
For this your Highness' liberal gift
I here absolve you, without shrift.

King. Gramercies, friar. Now, Robin Hood,
Sith Robin Hood it needs must be,
I was about to ask before,
If thou didst see the great stag's fall.

Robin. I did, my Lord, I saw it all ;
But missing this same prating friar,
And hearing you so much desire
To have the lozel's company,
I went to seek small honesty.

Friar. But you found much, when you found me.

Robin. I, Much my man ; but not a jot
Of honesty in thee, God wot.

Queen. Robin, you do abuse the Friar.

Friar. Madam, I dare not call him liar :
He may be bold with me he knows.
How now, Prince John, how goes, how goes
This woodman's life with you to-day ?
My fellow Woodnet you would be.

John. I am thy fellow, thou dost see;
And to be plain, as God me save,
So well I like thee, merry knave,
That I thy company must have:
Nay, and I will.

Friar. Nay, and you shall.

Robin. My Lord, you need not fear at all,
But you shall have his company:
He will be bold I warrant you.

King. Know you where e'er a spring is nigh?
Fain would I drink, I am right dry.

Robin. I have a drink within my bower
Of pleasant taste and sovereign power:
My reverend uncle gives it me,
To give unto your Majesty.

King. I would be loth, indeed, being in heat
To drink cold water. Let us to thy bower.

Robin. Run, Friar, before,
And bid my uncle be in readiness.

Friar. Gone with a trice* on such good business.
[*Ereunt om*

SCENE III.†

Enter MARIAN, with a white apron.

Marian. What Much? What Jenny? Much, I s

Much. What's the matter mistress?

Marian. I pray thee see the fueller
Suffer the cook to want no wood.
Good Lord, where is this idle girl?
Why Jenny!

Jenny. (*within.*) I come, forsooth.

Marian. I pray thee, bring the flowers forth.

* "In a trice" is the usual expression. See a variety of instances collected by Mr. Todd in his Dictionary, but none of them has "with a trice," as in this place: the old copy prints the ordinary abbreviation for *with*, which may have been misread by printer.

† The scenes are marked, though incorrectly, in the old copy far; but the rest of the play is only divided by the *exits* or *entries* of the characters.

Much. I'll go send her, mistress ; and help the cooks, if they have any need.

Marian. Dispatch good Much. What Jen, I say!

Enter JENNY.

Much. Hie ye, hie ye ! she calls for life. [*Exit Much.*]

Marian. Indeed, indeed, you do me wrong,
To let me cry, and call so long.

Jenny. Forsooth, I straw'd* the dining bowers,
And smooth'd the walks with herbs and flowers.
The yeomen's tables I have spread,
Dress'd salts, laid trenchers, set on bread.
Nay, all is well, I warrant you.

Marian. You are not well, I promise you,
Your 'foresleeves are not pinn'd ; fie, fie !
And all your head-geer stands awry.
Give me the flowers. Go in, for shame,
And quickly see you mend the same. [*Exit Jenny.*]

Enter SIR DONCASTER, PRIOR. MARIAN strewing flowers.

Doncaster. How busy mistress Marian is :
She thinks this is her day of bliss.

Prior. But it shall be the woeful'st day
That ever chanc'd her, if I may.

Marian. Why are you two thus in the air ?
Your wounds are green. Good coz have care.

Prior. Thanks for your kindness, gentle maid :
My cousin Robert us hath prayed,
To help him in this business.

Enter FRIAR.

Friar. Sir Doncaster, Sir Doncaster !

Doncaster. Holla.

Friar. I pray you did you see the Prior ?

Prior. Why here I am. What wouldst thou, Friar ?

Friar. The King is heated in the chace,
And posteth hitherward apace.
He told my master he was dry,
And he desires ye, presently,

* Jenny, a country wench, uses the old word *straw'd* ; but when the author speaks afterwards in the stage direction, he describes Marian as "*strewing flowers.*" Shakespeare has *o'er-strawed* in *Venus and Adonis*, perhaps for the sake of the rhyme.

To send the drink whereof ye spake.

Prior. Come, it is here : haste let us make.

[Exeunt Doncaster, Prior and Friar. Horns blow.

Enter KING, QUEEN, JOHN, SCARLET, SCATHLOCK, ELY, FITZWATER, SALISBURY, CHESTER. Marian kneels down.

Marian. Most gracious Sovereign, welcome once again :

Welcome to you, and all your princely train.

King. 'Thanks, lovely hostess ; we are homely guests. Where's Robin Hood ? he promis'd me some drink.

Marian. Your handmaid, Robin, will not then be long : The Friar, indeed, came running to his uncle, Who, with Sir Doncaster, were here with me, And all together went for such a drink.

King. Well, in a better time it could not come, For I am very hot, and passing dry.

Enter ROBIN HOOD, a cup, a towel, leading DONCASTER : TUCK and MUCH putting the Prior.

Robin. Traitor ! I'll draw thee out before the King.

Friar. Come, murderous Prior.

Much. Come, ye dog's face.

King. Why how now, Robin ? Where's the drink you bring ?

Robin. Lay hold on these !

Far be it, I should bring your Majesty
The drink these two prepared for your taste.

King. Why, Robin Hood ? be brief and answer me.
I am amazed at thy troubled looks.

Robin. Long will not my ill looks amaze your grace ;
~~I shortly look never to look again.~~

Marian. Never to look ! What will it still be night ?
If thou look never, day can never be.

What ails my Robin ? Wherefore dost thou faint ?

Robin. Because I cannot stand : yet now I can.
Thanks to my King, and thanks to Marian.

King. Robin, be brief, and tell us what hath chanc'd.

Robin. I must be brief, for I am sure of death,
Before a long tale can be half way told.

Fitzwater. Of death, my son ! bright sun of all my
joy !

Death cannot have the power of virtuous life.

Robin. Not of the virtues, but the life it can.

King. What dost thou speak of death? how shouldst thou die?

Robin. By poison, and the Prior's treachery.

Queen. Why, take this sovereign powder at my hands: Take it, and live in spite of poison's power.

Doncaster. I, set him forward. Powders quoth ye? hah! I am a fool then, if a little dust,

The shaving of a horn, a Bezar's stone,*

Or any antidote have power to stay

The execution of my heart's resolve.

Tut, tut, you labour, lovely Queen, in vain,

And on a thankless groom your toil bestow.

Now hath your foe reveng'd you of your foe:

Robin shall die if all the world said no.

Marian. How the wolf howls! Fly, like a tender kid Into thy shepherd's bosom. Shield me love!

Canst thou not Robin? Where shall I be hid?

Oh, God! these ravens will seize upon thy dove.

Robin. They cannot hurt thee, pray thee, do not fear: Base curs will couch, the lion being near.

Queen. How works my powder?

Robin. Very well, fair Queen.

King. Dost thou feel any ease?

Robin. I shall, I trust, anon:

Sleep falls upon mine eyes. Oh, I must sleep, And they that love me do not waken me.

Marian. Sleep in my lap, and I will sing to thee.

John. He should not sleep.

Robin. I must, for I must die;

While I live, therefore, let me have some rest.

Fitzwater. I, let him him rest: the poison urges sleep.

* Or Bezoar-stone, formerly considered an antidote for poison. Sir Thomas Brown was not prepared to contradict it: he says, that "Lapis Lasuli hath in it a purgative faculty we know: that *Bezour* is *antidotum*, Lapis Judaicus diuretical, Coral antipileptical, we will not deny"—*Vulgar Errors*, edit. 1658, p. 104. He also (p. 205) calls it the *Bezour nut*, "for being broken, it discovereth a kernel of a leguminous smell and taste, bitter like a lupine, and will swell and sprout if set in the ground." Harts-horn shavings were also considered a preservative against poison.

Robin
is a
martyr
and
his
death
action
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positive
good
it
the
death
of
Riglar
and
the
crucifix

When he awakes there is no hope of life.

Doncaster. Of life ! Now, by the little time I have to live,

He cannot live one hour for your lives.

King. Villain ! what art thou ?

Doncaster. Why, I am a knight.

Chester. Thou wert, indeed. If it so please your Grace,

I will describe my knowledge of this wretch.

King. Do, Chester.

Chester. This Doncaster, for so the felon hight,
Was by the King, your father, made a knight,
And well in arms he did himself behave.

Many a bitter storm, the wind of rage
Blasted this realm with, in those woeful days
When the unnatural fights continued
Between your kingly father and his sons.

This cut-throat, knighted in that time of woe,
Seized on a beauteous nun, at Berkhamstead,
As we were marching toward Winchester,
After proud Lincoln was compell'd to yield.

He took this virgin straying in the field ;
For all the nuns and every convent* fled
The dangers that attended on our troops :
For those sad times too oft did testify,
War's rage hath no regard to piety.

She humbly pray'd him, for the love of heaven,
To guide her to her father's, two miles thence :
He swore he would, and very well he might,
For to the camp he was a forager.

Upon the way they came into a wood,
Wherein, in brief, he stripp'd this tender maid :
Whose lust, when she in vain had long withstood,
Being by strength and torments overlaid,
He did a sacrilegious deed of rape,
And left her bath'd in her own tears and blood.

When she reviv'd, she to her father's got,
And got her father to make just complaint
Unto your mother, being then in camp.

* The old word for *convent*: Covent-Garden, therefore, is still properly called.

Queen. Is this the villain, Chester, that defil'd
Sir Eustace Stutville's chaste and beauteous child ?

Doncaster. I, madam, this is he,
That made a wench dance naked in a wood ;
And, for she did deny what I desired,
I scourg'd her for her pride, 'till her fair skin
With stripes was chequer'd like a vintner's grate.*
And what was this ? A mighty matter sure !
I have a thousand more than she defil'd,
And cut the squeaking throats of some of them :
I grieve I did not hers.

Queen. Punish him, Richard.
A fairer virgin never saw the sun ;
A chaster maid was never sworn a nun.

King. How 'scap'd the villain punishment that time ?

Fitzwater. I rent his spurs off, and disgraded him.

Chester. And then he rail'd upon the Queen and me.
Being committed, he his keeper slew,
And to your father fled, who pardon'd him.

Richard. God give his soul a pardon for that sin.

Salisbury. Oh, had I heard his name, or seen his face,
I had defended Robin from this chance !

Ah, villain ! shut those gloomy lights of thine.
Remember'st thou a little son of mine,
Whose nurse at Wilton first thou ravishedst,
And slew'st two maids that did attend on them ?

Doncaster. I grant I dash'd the brains out of a brat,
Thine if he were, I care not : had he been
The first born comfort of a royal king,
And should have yall'd when Doncaster cried peace,
I would have done by him as then I did.

King. Soon shall the world be rid of such a wretch.
Let him be hang'd alive in the highway
That joineth to the Tower.†

* The *grate* of a vintner was no doubt what is often termed in old writers the *red lattice*, *lettice*, or *chequers*, painted at the doors of vintners, and still preserved at almost every public-house. See D. O. P. vol. v. note 24, to *The Miseries of inforced Marriage*.

† The 4to. reads,

————— " in the high way
That joineth to the *power*."

Doncaster. Alive or dead, (I reckon not how I die.)
You, them, and these, I desperately defy.

Ely. Repent, or never look to be absolv'd ;
But die accurs'd, as thou deservest well.

Doncaster. Then give me my desert : curse one by one !

Ely. First I accurse thee ; and if thou persist,
Unto damnation leave thee, wretched man.

Doncaster. What do I care for your damnation ?
Am I not doomed to death ? what more damnation
Can there ensue your loud and yelling cries ?

Prior. Yes, devil ! hear thy fellow spirit speak,
Who would repent ; Oh, fain he would repent !
After this body's bitter punishment,
There is an ever-during endless woe,
A quenchless fire, an unconsuming pain
Which desperate souls and bodies must endure.

Doncaster. Can you preach this, yet set me on, Sir
Prior,
To run into this endless, quenchless fire ?

Prior. High heavens, shew mercy to my many ills !
Never had this been done, but like a fiend,
Thou tempted'st me with ceaseless devilish thoughts.
Therefore I curse with bitterness of soul
The hour wherein I saw thy baleful eyes.
My eyes I curse, for looking on those eyes !
My ears I curse, for hearkening to thy tongue !
I curse thy tongue for tempting of mine ears !
Each part I curse, that we call thine or mine ;
Thine for enticing mine, mine following thine !

Doncaster. A holy prayer. What collect have we
next ?

[*This time Robin stirs.*

Fitzwater. My Marian wanteth words, such is her woe ;
But old Fitzwater for his girl and him
Begg nothing, but world's plague for such a foe,
Which causeless harm'd a virtuous nobleman,
A pityer of his griefs, when he felt grief.
Therefore, bethink thee of thy hateful deed,
Thou faithless Prior, and thou this ruthless thief.

Prior. Will no man curse me, giving so much cause ?
Then Doncaster, ourselves ourselves accurse,

And let no good betide to thee or me !

[*All the yeomen, Friar, Much, Jenny cry.*

All. Amen, amen : accursed may he be,
For murdering Robin, flower of courtesy.

[*Robin sits up.*

Robin. Oh, ring not such a peal for Robin's death !
Let sweet forgiveness be my passing bell.
~~Art thou there Warman ?~~ then fly forth my breath ;
To die within thy arms contents me well.

Prior. Keep in, keep in a little while thy soul,
Till I have pour'd my soul forth at thy feet.

Robin. I slept not, uncle ; I your grief did hear,
Let him forgive thy soul that bought it dear :
Your body's deed, I in my death forgive,
And humbly beg the king that you may live.
Stand to your clergy, uncle ; * save your life
And lead a better life than you have done.

Prior. Oh, gentle nephew ! Oh, my brother's son,
Thou dying glory of old Huntington !

Wishest thou life to such a murderous foe ?

I will not live since thou must life forego.

Oh, happy Warman ! blessed in thy end ;

Now too, too late thy truth I do commend.

Oh, nephew, nephew ! Doncaster and I

> Murder'd poor Warman, for he did deny

To join with us in this black tragedy.

Robin. Alas, poor Warman ! Friar, Little John,

* Robin Hood advises his uncle to insist upon his plea of *privilegium clericale*, or benefit of clergy :—

"Stand to your clergy, uncle ; save your life."

"Originally the law was held that no man should be admitted to the privilege of clergy, but such as had the *habitus et tonsuram clericalem*. But in process of time a much wider and more comprehensive criterion was established ; every one that could read (a mark of great learning in those days of ignorance and her sister superstition) being accounted a clerk, or *clericus*, and allowed the benefit of clerkship, though neither initiated in holy orders, nor trimmed with the clerical tonsure." Blackstone's Comm. iv. B 4. ch. 28. We have already seen that the king and nobles in this play called in the aid of Friar Tuck to read the inscription on the stag's collar, though the king could ascertain that it was in Saxon characters.

I told ye both where Warman's body lay,
And of his burial I'll dispose anon.

King. Is there no law, Lord Ely, to convict
This Prior, that confesses murders thus?

Ely. He is a hallow'd man, and must be tried,
And punish'd by the censure of the church.

Prior. The church therein doth err: God doth allow
No canon to preserve a murderer's life.

Richard! king Richard! in thy grandsire's day's,
A law was made, the clergy sworn thereto,
That whatsoever churchman did commit
Treason or murder, or false felony,
Should like a secular be punished.

Treason we did, for sure we did intend
King Richard's poisoning, sovereign of this land.
Murder we did in working Warman's end,
And my dear nephew's, by this fatal hand:
And theft we did, for we have robb'd the king,
The state, the nobles, commons, and his men,
Of a true peer, firm pillar, liberal lord.

Fitzwater we have robbed of a kind son,
And Marian's love-joys we have quite undone:

Doncaster. Whoop! what a coil is here with your
confession.

Prior. I ask but judgment for my foul transgression

King. Thy own mouth hath condemn'd thee. Hence
with him!

Hang this man dead, then see him buried;
But let the other hang alive in chains.

Doncaster. I thank you, sir.

[*Exeunt Yeomen, Friar, Prisoners, Much.*

John. Myself will, go my lord,
And see sharp justice done upon these slaves.

Robin. Oh, go not hence, Prince John! a word or two,
Before I die, I fain would say to you.

King. Robin, we see what we are sad to see,
Death, like a champion, treading down thy life:
Yet in thy end somewhat to comfort thee,
We freely give to thy betrothed wife,
Beauteous and chaste Matilda, all those lands,

Fallen by thy folly to the Prior's hands,
And by his fault now forfeited to me.
Earl Huntington, she shall thy countess be,
And thy wight yeomen, they shall wend with me
Against the faithless enemies of Christ.

Robin. Bring forth a bier, and cover it with green;
That on my death-bed I may here sit down.

[*A bier is brought in. He sits.*

At Robin's burial let no black be seen,
Let no hand give for him a mourning gown;
~~Fer in his death his king hath given him life,~~
~~By this large gift, given to his maiden wife.~~
Chaste maid Matilda, countess of account,
Chase with thy bright eyes, all these clouds of woe
From these fair cheeks; I pray thee, sweet, do so:
Think it is bootless folly to complain
For that which never can be had again.
Queen Elinor, you once were Matild's foe;
Prince John, you long sought her unlawful love;
Let dying Robin Hood intreat you both
To change those passions: madam, turn your hate,
To princely love: prince John, convert your love
To virtuous passions, chaste and moderate.
Oh, that your gracious right hands would enfold
Matilda's right hand, prison'd in my palm,
And swear to do what Robin Hood desires!

Queen. I swear I will: I will a mother be
To fair Matilda's life and chastity. ✓

John. When John solicits chaste Matilda's ears
With lawless suits, as he hath often done, ✓
Or offers to the altars of her eyes,
Lascivious poems, stuff'd with vanities,
He craves to see but short and sour days:
His death be like to Robin's he desires;
His perjured body prove a poison'd prey,
For cowled monks, and barefoot begging friars.

Robin. Enough, enough! Fitzwater take your child.
My dying frost, which no sun's heat can thaw,
Closes the powers of all my outward parts:

My freezing blood runs back unto my heart,
 Where it assists death, which it would resist :
 Only my love a little hinders death,
 For he beholds her eyes, and cannot smite :
 Then go not yet Matilda, stay awhile.
 Friar make speed, and list my latest will.

Matilda. Oh, let me look for ever in thy eyes,
 And lay my warm breath to thy bloodless lips,
 If my sight can restrain death's tyrannies,
 Or keep life's breath within thy bosom lock'd.

Robin. Away, away !
 Forbear my love ; all this is but delay.

Fitzwater. Come, maiden daughter, from my maiden
 son,

And give him leave to do what must be done.

Robin. First, I bequeath my soul to all souls' Saver,
 And will my body to be buried
 At Wakefield, underneath the Abbey wall ;
 And in this order make my funeral.
 When I am dead stretch me upon this bier :
 My beads and primer shall my pillow be ;
 On this side be my bow, my good shafts here ;
 Upon my breast the cross, and underneath
 My trusty sword, thus fasten'd in the sheath.
 Let Warman's body at my feet be laid,
 Poor Warman, that in my defence did die.
 For holy dirges sing me woodmen's songs,
 As ye to Wakefield walk with voices shrill.
 This for myself. My goods and plate I give
 Among my yeomen : them I do bestow.
 Upon my sovereign, Richard. This is all.
 My liege, farewell ! my love, farewell, farewell !
 Farewell fair queen, prince John, and noble lords !
 Father Fitzwater, heartily adieu !
 Adieu, my yeomen tall. Matilda, close mine eyes.
 Friar, farewell ! farewell to all !

Matilda. Oh, must my hands with envious death
 conspire
 To shut the morning gates of my life's light !

Fitzwater. It is a duty, and thy love's desire :
I'll help thee, girl, to close up Robin's sight.*

King. Laments are bootless, tears cannot restore
Lost life, Matilda; therefore weep no more :
And since our mirth is turned into moan,
Our merry sport to tragic funeral,
We will prepare our power for Austria,
~~after Earl Robert's timeless burial.~~
Fall to your wood-songs, therefore, yeomen bold,
And deck his hearse with flowers that lov'd you dear :
Dispose his goods as he hath them dispos'd.
Fitzwater and Matilda, bide you here.
See you the body unto Wakefield borne :
A little we will bear ye company,
But all of us at London 'point to meet :
Thither, Fitzwater, bring Earl Robin's men ;
And, Friar, see you come along with them.

Friar. Ah, my liege lord, the Friar faints,
And hath no words to make complaints ;
But since he must forsake this place,
He will await, and thanks your grace.

SONG.

*Weep, weep, ye woodmen wail,
Your hands with sorrow wring ;
Your master Robin Hood lies dead,
Therefore sigh as you sing.*

*Here lie his primer and his beads,
His bent bow and his arrows keen,
His good sword and his holy cross :
Now cast on flowers fresh and green ;*

*And as they full shed tears and say,
Wella, wella-day, wella, wella-day :
Thus cast ye flowers and sing,
And on to Wakefield take your way. [Exeunt.*

* This account of the death of Robin Hood varies from all the popular narratives and ballads. The MS. Sloan, 715, nu. 7, f. 157, agrees with the ballad in Ritson (ii. 183), that he was treacherously bled to death by the Prioress of Kirksley.

When he awakes there is no hope of life.

Doncaster. Of life ! Now, by the little time I have to live,

He cannot live one hour for your lives.

King. Villain ! what art thou ?

Doncaster. Why, I am a knight.

Chester. Thou wert, indeed. If it so please **your** Grace,

I will describe my knowledge of this wretch.

King. Do, Chester.

Chester. This Doncaster, for so the felon hight,
Was by the King, your father, made a knight,
And well in arms he did himself behave.
Many a bitter storm, the wind of rage
Blasted this realm with, in those woeful days
When the unnatural fights continued
Between your kingly father and his sons.
This cut-throat, knighted in that time of woe,
Seized on a beauteous nun, at Berkhamstead,
As we were marching toward Winchester,
After proud Lincoln was compell'd to yield.
He took this virgin straying in the field ;
For all the nuns and every covent* fled
The dangers that attended on our troops :
For those sad times too oft did testify,
War's rage hath no regard to piety.
She humbly pray'd him, for the love of heaven,
To guide her to her father's, two miles thence :
He swore he would, and very well he might,
For to the camp he was a forager.
Upon the way they came into a wood,
Wherein, in brief, he stripp'd this tender maid :
Whose lust, when she in vain had long withstood,
Being by strength and torments overlaid,
He did a sacrilegious deed of rape,
And left her bath'd in her own tears and blood.
When she reviv'd, she to her father's got,
And got her father to make just complaint
Unto your mother, being then in camp.

* The old word for *convent* : Covent-Garden, therefore, is still properly called.

1. Is this the villain, Chester, that defil'd
 face Stutville's chaste and beauteous child?
aster. I, madam, this is he,
 made a wench dance naked in a wood;
 for she did deny what I desired,
 I'd her for her pride, 'till her fair skin
 ripe was chequer'd like a vintner's grate.*
 What was this? A mighty matter sure!
 A thousand more than she defil'd,
 the squeaking throats of some of them:
 I did not hers.

2. Punish him, Richard.
 A virgin never saw the sun;
 Her maid was never sworn a nun.
 How 'scap'd the villain punishment that time?
ater. I rent his spurs off, and disgraced him.
er. And then he rail'd upon the Queen and me.
 Committed, he his keeper slew,
 your father fled, who pardon'd him.
ard. God give his soul a pardon for that sin.
bury. Oh, had I heard his name, or seen his face,
 I defended Robin from this chance!
 I ain! shut those gloomy lights of thine.
 I ber'st thou a little son of mine,
 I nurse at Wilton first thou ravishedst,
 I ew'st two maids that did attend on them?
aster. I grant I dash'd the brains out of a brat,
 if he were, I care not: had he been
 the best born comfort of a royal king,
 I could have yall'd when Doncaster cried peace,
 I have done by him as then I did.
 Soon shall the world be rid of such a wretch.
 I be hang'd alive in the highway
 I joineth to the Tower.†

* *grate* of a vintner was no doubt what is often termed in old
 the *red lattice*, *lettice*, or *chequers*, painted at the doors of
 and still preserved at almost every public-house. See
 vol. v. note 24, to *The Miseries of enforced Marriage*.
 4to. reads,

————— "in the high way
 That joineth to the *power*."

the L. J. v.
2 H
with

Doncaster. Alive or dead, (I reckon not how I die.)
You, them, and these, I desperately defy.

Ely. Repent, or never look to be absolv'd;
But die accurs'd, as thou deservest well.

Doncaster. Then give me my desert: curse one by one!

Ely. First I accurse thee; and if thou persist,
Unto damnation leave thee, wretched man.

Doncaster. What do I care for your damnation?
Am I not doomed to death? what more damnation
Can there ensue your loud and yelling cries?

Prior. Yes, devil! hear thy fellow spirit speak,
Who would repent; Oh, fain he would repent!
After this body's bitter punishment,
There is an ever-during endless woe,
A quenchless fire, an unconsuming pain
Which desperate souls and bodies must endure.

Doncaster. Can you preach this, yet set me on, Sir
Prior,
To run into this endless, quenchless fire?

Prior. High heavens, shew mercy to my many ills!
Never had this been done, but like a fiend,
Thou tempted'st me with ceaseless devilish thoughts.
Therefore I curse with bitterness of soul
The hour wherein I saw thy baleful eyes.
My eyes I curse, for looking on those eyes!
My ears I curse, for hearkening to thy tongue!
I curse thy tongue for tempting of mine ears!
Each part I curse, that we call thine or mine;
Thine for enticing mine, mine following thine!!

Doncaster. A holy prayer. What collect have we
next? [This time Robin stirs.

Fitzwater. My Marian wanteth words, such is her woe;
But old Fitzwater for his girl and him
Begg nothing, but world's plague for such a foe,
Which causeless harm'd a virtuous nobleman,
A pityer of his griefs, when he felt grief.
Therefore, bethink thee of thy hateful deed,
Thou faithless Prior, and thou this ruthless thief.

Prior. Will no man curse me, giving so much cause?
Then Doncaster, ourselves ourselves accurse,

And let no good betide to thee or me !

[*All the yeomen, Friar, Much, Jenny cry.*

All. Amen, amen : accursed may he be,
For murdering Robin, flower of courtesy.

[*Robin sits up.*

Robin. Oh, ring not such a peal for Robin's death !
Let sweet forgiveness be my passing bell.
~~Art thou there Marriot ?~~ then fly forth my breath ;
To die within thy arms contents me well.

Prior. Keep in, keep in a little while thy soul,
Till I have pour'd my soul forth at thy feet.

Robin. I slept not, uncle ; I your grief did hear,
Let him forgive thy soul that bought it dear :
Your body's deed, I in my death forgive,
And humbly beg the king that you may live.
Stand to your clergy, uncle ; * save your life
And lead a better life than you have done.

Prior. Oh, gentle nephew ! Oh, my brother's son,
Thou dying glory of old Huntington !
Wishest thou life to such a murderous foe ?
I will not live since thou must life forego.
Oh, happy Warman ! blessed in thy end ;
Now too, too late thy truth I do commend.
Oh, nephew, nephew ! Doncaster and I
Murder'd poor Warman, for he did deny
To join with us in this black tragedy.

Robin. Alas, poor Warman ! Friar, Little John,

* Robin Hood advises his uncle to insist upon his plea of *privilegium clericale*, or benefit of clergy :—

“ Stand to your clergy, uncle ; save your life.”

“ Originally the law was held that no man should be admitted to the privilege of clergy, but such as had the *habitus et tonsuram clericalem*. But in process of time a much wider and more comprehensive criterion was established ; every one that could read (a mark of great learning in those days of ignorance and her sister superstition) being accounted a clerk, or *clericus*, and allowed the benefit of clerkship, though neither initiated in holy orders, nor trimmed with the clerical tonsure.” Blackstone's Comm. iv. B 4. ch. 28. We have already seen that the king and nobles in this play called in the aid of Friar Tuck to read the inscription on the stag's collar, though the king could ascertain that it was in Saxon characters.

I told ye both where Warman's body lay,
And of his burial I'll dispose anon.

King. Is there no law, Lord Ely, to convict
This Prior, that confesses murders thus?

Ely. He is a hallow'd man, and must be tried,
And punish'd by the censure of the church.

Prior. The church therein doth err: God doth allow
No canon to preserve a murderer's life.

Richard! king Richard! in thy grandsire's day's,
A law was made, the clergy sworn thereto,
That whatsoever churchman did commit
Treason or murder, or false felony,
Should like a secular be punished.

Treason we did, for sure we did intend
King Richard's poisoning, sovereign of this land.
Murder we did in working Warman's end,
And my dear nephew's, by this fatal hand:
And theft we did, for we have robb'd the king,
The state, the nobles, commons, and his men,
Of a true peer, firm pillar, liberal lord.

Fitzwater we have robbed of a kind son,
And Marian's love-joys we have quite undone:

Doncaster. Whoop! what a coil is here with your
confession.

Prior. I ask but judgment for my foul transgression

King. Thy own mouth hath condemn'd thee. Hence
with him!

Hang this man dead, then see him buried;
But let the other hang alive in chains.

Doncaster. I thank you, sir.

[*Exeunt Yeomen, Friar, Prisoners, Much.*

John. Myself will, go my lord,
And see sharp justice done upon these slaves.

Robin. Oh, go not hence, Prince John! a word or two,
Before I die, I fain would say to you.

King. Robin, we see what we are sad to see,
Death, like a champion, treading down thy life:
Yet in thy end somewhat to comfort thee,
We freely give to thy betrothed wife,
Beauteous and chaste Matilda, all those lands,

Fallen by thy folly to the Prior's hands,
 And by his fault now forfeited to me.
 Earl Huntington, she shall thy countess be,
 And thy wight yeomen, they shall wend with me
 Against the faithless enemies of Christ.

Robin. Bring forth a bier, and cover it with green ;
 That on my death-bed I may here sit down.

[*A bier is brought in. He sits.*

At Robin's burial let no black be seen,
 Let no hand give for him a mourning gown ;
 ~~Fer in his death his king hath given him life,~~
 ~~By this large gift, given to his maiden wife.~~
 Chaste maid Matilda, countess of account,
 Chase with thy bright eyes, all these clouds of woe
 From these fair cheeks ; I pray thee, sweet, do so :
 ~~Think it is bootless folly to complain~~
 For that which never can be had again.
 Queen Elinor, you once were Matild's foe ;
 Prince John, you long sought her unlawful love ;
 ~~Let dying Robin Hood intreat you both~~
 ~~To change those passions: madam, turn your hate,~~
 ~~To princely love: prince John, convert your love~~
 ~~To virtuous passions, chaste and moderate.~~
 Oh, that your gracious right hands would enfold
 Matilda's right hand, prison'd in my palm,
 And swear to do what Robin Hood desires !

Queen. I swear I will: I will a mother be
 To fair Matilda's life and chastity. ✓

John. When John solicits chaste Matilda's ears
 With lawless suits, as he hath often done, ✓
 Or offers to the altars of her eyes,
 Lascivious poems, stuff'd with vanities,
 He craves to see but short and sour days:
 His death be like to Robin's he desires;
 His perjured body prove a poison'd prey,
 For cowed monks, and barefoot begging friars.

Robin. Enough, enough! Fitzwater take your child.
 My dying frost, which no sun's heat can thaw,
 Closes the powers of all my outward parts :

My freezing blood runs back unto my heart,
 Where it assists death, which it would resist :
 Only my love a little hinders death,
 For he beholds her eyes, and cannot smite :
 Then go not yet Matilda, stay awhile.
 Friar make speed, and list my latest will.

Matilda. Oh, let me look for ever in thy eyes,
 And lay my warm breath to thy bloodless lips,
 If my sight can restrain death's tyrannies,
 Or keep life's breath within thy bosom lock'd.

Robin. Away, away !
 Forbear my love ; all this is but delay.

Fitzwater. Come, maiden daughter, from my maid
 son,

And give him leave to do what must be done.

Robin. First, I bequeath my soul to all souls' Sav
 And will my body to be buried
 At Wakefield, underneath the Abbey wall ;
 And in this order make my funeral.
 When I am dead stretch me upon this bier :
 My beads and primer shall my pillow be ;
 On this side be my bow, my good shafts here ;
 Upon my breast the cross, and underneath
 My trusty sword, thus fasten'd in the sheath.
 Let Warman's body at my feet be laid,
 Poor Warman, that in my defence did die.
 For holy dirges sing me woodmen's songs,
 As ye to Wakefield walk with voices shrill.
 This for myself. My goods and plate I give
 Among my yeomen : them I do bestow.
 Upon my sovereign, Richard. This is all.
 My liege, farewell ! my love, farewell, farewell !
 Farewell fair queen, prince John, and noble lord
 Father Fitzwater, heartily adieu !
 Adieu, my yeomen tall. Matilda, close mine ey
 Friar, farewell ! farewell to all !

Matilda. Oh, must my hands with envior
 conspire
 To shut the morning gates of my life's light !

Fitzwater. It is a duty, and thy love's desire :
I'll help thee, girl, to close up Robin's sight.*

King. Laments are bootless, tears cannot restore
Lost life, Matilda ; therefore weep no more :
And since our mirth is turned into moan,
Our merry sport to tragic funeral,
We will prepare our power for Austria,
~~After Earl Robert's timeless burial.~~

Fall to your wood-songs, therefore, yeomen bold,
And deck his hearse with flowers that lov'd you dear :
Dispose his goods as he hath them dispos'd.

Fitzwater and Matilda, bide you here.

See you the body unto Wakefield borne :

A little we will bear ye company,

But all of us at London 'point to meet :

Thither, *Fitzwater,* bring Earl Robin's men ;

And, *Friar,* see you come along with them.

Friar. Ah, my liege lord, the *Friar* faints,

And hath no words to make complaints ;

But since he must forsake this place,

He will await, and thanks your grace.

SONG.

*Weep, weep, ye woodmen wail,
Your hands with sorrow wring ;
Your master Robin Hood lies dead,
Therefore sigh as you sing.*

*Here lie his primer and his beads,
His bent bow and his arrows keen,
His good sword and his holy cross :
Now cast on flowers fresh and green ;*

*And as they fall shed tears and say,
Wella, wella-day, wella, wella-day :
Thus cast ye flowers and sing,*

And on to Wakefield take your way. [Exeunt.]

* This account of the death of Robin Hood varies from all the popular narratives and ballads. The MS. Sloan, 715, nu. 7, f. 157, agrees with the ballad in Ritson (ii. 183), that he was treacherously bled to death by the Prioress of Kirksley.

Friar. Here doth the Friar leave with grievance ;
Robin is dead that graced his entrance,
And being dead, he craves his audience
With this short play they would have patience.*

Enter CHESTER.

Chester. Nay, Friar, at request of thy kind friend,
Let not thy play too soon be at an end.
Though Robin Hood be dead, his yeomen gone,
And that thou think'st there now remains not one,
To act another scene or two for thee,
Yet know full well, to please this company,
We mean to end Matilda's tragedy.

Friar. Off then, I wish you, with your Kendal green :
Let not sad grief in fresh array be seen.
Matilda's story is replete with tears,
Wrongs, desolations, ruins, deadly fears.
In, and attire ye. Though I tired be,
Yet will I tell my mistress' tragedy.
Apollo's masterdom† I invoke,
To whom henceforth my deeds I dedicate ;
That of his godhead, 'bove all gods divine,
With his rich spirit he would lighten mine :
That I may sing true lays of trothless deeds,
Which to conceive my heart through sorrow bleeds.
Cheer thee, sad soul, and in a lofty line
Thunder out wrong, compast in cloudy tears:

[*Enter in black.†*]

* The first act has already occupied too much space, but it was difficult to divide it: in fact, as Friar Tuck says, it is a "short play," complete in itself. What follows is an Induction to the rest of the story, the Friar continuing on the stage after the others have gone out.

† The 4to reads thus,—

"Apollo's master doone I invoke,"

but probably we ought to read—

"Apollo's masterdom I invoke ;"

and the text has been altered accordingly: *masterdom* means *power, rule*; to invoke Apollo's masterdom, is therefore to invoke Apollo's power to assist the Friar in his undertaking.

‡ "Enter in black" is the whole of the stage direction, and those who enter are afterwards designated by the letters *Cho.* Perhaps the principal performers arrive attired in black, and are mentioned as *Chorus*, one speaking for the rest. *Cho.* may, however, be a misprint for *Chester*, who was sent in to "attire him."

Shew to the eyes, fill the beholders ears,
With all the lively acts of lustful rage,
Restrain'd by modest tears, and chastity's intreats :
And let king John, that ill-part personage,
By suits, devices, practices and threats,
And when he sees all serveth to no end,
Of chaste Matilda let him make an end.

Cho. We are all fitted, Friar : shall we begin ?

Friar. Well art thou suited : would my order would
Permit me habit equal to my heart !

Cho. If you remember, John did take an oath
Never again to seek Matilda's love.

Friar. O what is he, that's sworn affection's slave,
That will not violate all laws, all oaths ?

And being mighty, what will he omit
To compass his intents, though ne'er so ill ?—

You must suppose king Richard now is dead,
And John (resistless) is fair England's lord ;

Who striving to forget Matilda's love,

Takes to his wife the beauteous Isabel,

Betroth'd to Hugh de Brun, Earl of North March :*

And picking quarrels under show of kin,

Wholly divorces his first queen away.

But yet Matilda still, still troubles him,

And being in the court, so oft he courts her,

That by her noble father, old Fitzwater,

She is remov'd from his lust-tempting eye.

But tides restrain'd o'erswell their bounds with rage :

Her absence adds more fuel to his fire.

In sleep he sees her, and his waking thoughts

Study by day to compass his desire.

Cho. Friar, since now you speak of visions,

It was received by tradition

From those that were right near unto king John,

* This name ought to be Hugh *le* Brun, and not Hugh *de* Brun :
"John married Isabel the daughter and heiress of the Earl of Angou-
lesme, who was before affianced to *Hugh le Brun*, Earl of March, (a
peer of great estate and excellence in France) by the consent of king
Richard in whose custody she then was."

Samuel Daniel's History of England.

Of three strange visions that to him appear'd ;
And, as I guess, I told you what they were.

Friar. With them I will begin. Draw but that veil,
And there king John sits sleeping in his chair.

[Draw the curtain : the king sits sleeping, his sword by his side. Enter Austria, before whom cometh Ambition, and bringing him before the chair, King John, in sleep, maketh signs to avoid, and holdeth his own crown fast with both his hands.]

Friar. Ambition, that had ever waited on king John,
Now brings him Austria, easy to be ta'en,
Being wholly tam'd by Richard's warlike hand,
And bids him add that dukedom to his crown :
But he puts by Ambition, and contemns
All other kingdoms but the English crown,
Which he holds fast as if he would not lose.

[Enter Constance, leading Young Arthur : both offer to take the crown ; but with his foot he overturneth them : to them cometh Insurrection, led by the F. K. and L, menacing him, and leads the child again to the chair ; but he only layeth hand on his sword, and with his foot overthroweth the child, whom they take up as dead ; and Insurrection flying they mournfully bear in the body.]*

Friar. The lady and the child that did ascend,
Striving in vain to take the crown from John,
Were Constance and her son the Duke of Britaine,
Heir to the elder brother of the king :
Yet he sleeps on, and with a little spurn
The mother and the prince doth overturn.
Again, when Insurrection them assists,
Stirr'd by the French king and the wronged earl,
Whose troth-plight wife king John had ta'en to wife,
He only claps his hand upon his sword,
Mocketh their threatenings, and in their attempts
The harmless prince receives recureless death,
Whom they, too late, with bootless tears lament.

* "Led by F. K. and L." means, as afterwards appears, the French King, and Lord Hugh de Brun, Earl of North March.

[*Enter Queen with two Children borne after her: she ascends, and seeing no motion, she fetcheth her Children one by one; but seeing yet no motion, she descendeth wringing her hands, and departeth. Enter Matilda in a mourning veil, reading on a book, at whose coming he starteth, and sitteth upright: as she passeth by he smiles, and folds his arms as if he did embrace her: being gone, he starts suddenly and speaks.*

King. Matilda! stay Matilda, do but speak!
Who's there? Entreat Matilda to come back.

*Enter BONVILLE.**

Bonville. Who would you have, my lord?

King. Why, my Lord Bonville, I would have Matilda,
That but even now pass'd by toward the door.

Bonville. I saw her not, my lord.

King. Hadst thou a lover's eye,
A gnat, a mote, a shadow thou would'st spy.

Come, follow me; she cannot be so far,

But I shall overtake her: come, away! [*Exeunt.*

Friar. The last appearance shadow'd the fair Queen,
And her two children, at whose sight King John
Shewed neither sign nor shew of passion:

But when the sun came masked in a cloud,

And veiled beauty, join'd with chastity,

Appeared in Matilda's lovely shape,

He starts, he clasps, he wakes, he calls, he seeks

The shadow of that substance he affects.

To her he sues, but she his suit rejects;

To him she sues, but he her suit neglects:

He sues to be her love; she doth despise:

She sues to live a maid, which he denies.

What follows of this wilfull will and shall,

This no and nay, this quenchless, bootless fire,

This cold affection, and this hot desire,

The act itself shall tell; and the poor Friar

Your partial favours humbly doth require.

[*Exit.*

* The entrance of Bonville is omitted in the 4to. 1601.

Doncaster. Alive or dead, (I reckon not how I die.)
You, them, and these, I desperately defy.

Ely. Repent, or never look to be absolv'd;
But die accurs'd, as thou deservest well.

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And deck his hearse with flowers that lov'd you dear :

Dispose his goods as he hath them dispos'd.

Fitzwater and Matilda, bide you here.

See you the body unto Wakefield borne :

A little we will bear ye company,

But all of us at London 'point to meet :

Thither, Fitzwater, bring Earl Robin's men ;

And, Friar, see you come along with them.

Friar. Ah, my liege lord, the Friar faints,

And hath no words to make complaints ;

But since he must forsake this place,

He will await, and thanks your grace.

SONG.

*Weep, weep, ye woodmen wail,
Your hands with sorrow wring ;
Your master Robin Hood lies dead,
Therefore sigh as you sing.*

*Here lie his primer and his beads,
His bent bow and his arrows keen,
His good sword and his holy cross :
Now cast on flowers fresh and green ;*

*And as they full shed tears and say,
Wella, wella-day, wella, wella-day :
Thus cast ye flowers and sing,
And on to Wakefield take your way. [Exeunt.*

* This account of the death of Robin Hood varies from all the popular narratives and ballads. The MS. Sloan, 715, nu. 7, f. 157, agrees with the ballad in Ritson (ii. 183), that he was treacherously led to death by the Prioress of Kirksley.

Friar. Here doth the Friar leave with grievance;
Robin is dead that graced his entrance,
And being dead, he craves his audience
With this short play they would have patience.*

Enter CHESTER.

Chester. Nay, Friar, at request of thy kind friend,
Let not thy play too soon be at an end.
Though Robin Hood be dead, his yeomen gone,
And that thou think'st there now remains not one,
To act another scene or two for thee,
Yet know full well, to please this company,
We mean to end Matilda's tragedy.

Friar. Off then, I wish you, with your Kendal green
Let not sad grief in fresh array be seen.
Matilda's story is replete with tears,
Wrongs, desolations, ruins, deadly fears.
In, and attire ye. Though I tired be,
Yet will I tell my mistress' tragedy.
Apollo's masterdom† I invoke,
To whom henceforth my deeds I dedicate;
That of his godhead, 'bove all gods divine,
With his rich spirit he would lighten mine:
That I may sing true lays of trothless deeds,
Which to conceive my heart through sorrow bleeds.
Cheer thee, sad soul, and in a lofty line
Thunder out wrong, compast in cloudy tears:

[*Enter in black.*]

* The first act has already occupied too much space, but it *was* difficult to divide it: in fact, as Friar Tuck says, it is a "short play," complete in itself. What follows is an Induction to the rest of the story, the Friar continuing on the stage after the others have gone out.

† The 4to reads thus,—

"Apollo's *master doone* I invoke,"

but probably we ought to read—

"Apollo's *masterdom* I invoke ;"

and the text has been altered accordingly: *masterdom* means *power, rule*; to invoke Apollo's masterdom, is therefore to invoke Apollo's power to assist the Friar in his undertaking.

‡ "Enter in black" is the whole of the stage direction, and those who enter are afterwards designated by the letters *Cho.* Perhaps the principal performers arrive attired in black, and are mentioned as *Chorus*, one speaking for the rest. *Cho.* may, however, be a misprint for *Chester*, who was sent in to "attire him."

Shew to the eyes, fill the beholders ears,
With all the lively acts of lustful rage,
Restrain'd by modest tears, and chastity's intreats :
And let king John, that ill-part personage,
By suits, devices, practices and threats,
And when he sees all serveth to no end,
Of chaste Matilda let him make an end.

Cho. We are all fitted, Friar : shall we begin ?

Friar. Well art thou suited : would my order would
Eremit me habit equal to my heart !

Cho. If you remember, John did take an oath
Ever again to seek Matilda's love.

Friar. O what is he, that's sworn affection's slave,
That will not violate all laws, all oaths ?
And being mighty, what will he omit
To compass his intents, though ne'er so ill ?—
You must suppose king Richard now is dead,
And John (resistless) is fair England's lord ;
Who striving to forget Matilda's love,
Takes to his wife the beauteous Isabel,
Betroth'd to Hugh de Brun, Earl of North March :*
And picking quarrels under show of kin,
Wholly divorces his first queen away.
But yet Matilda still, still troubles him,
And being in the court, so oft he courts her,
That by her noble father, old Fitzwater,
She is remov'd from his lust-tempting eye.
But tides restrain'd o'erswell their bounds with rage :
Her absence adds more fuel to his fire.
In sleep he sees her, and his waking thoughts
Study by day to compass his desire.

Cho. Friar, since now you speak of visions,
It was received by tradition
From those that were right near unto king John,

* This name ought to be Hugh *le* Brun, and not Hugh *de* Brun :
"John married Isabel the daughter and heiress of the Earl of Angou-
esme, who was before affianced to *Hugh le Brun*, Earl of March, (a
peer of great estate and excellence in France) by the consent of king
Richard in whose custody she then was."

Samuel Daniel's History of England.

Of three strange visions that to him appear'd ;
And, as I guess, I told you what they were.

Friar. With them I will begin. Draw but that veil
And there king John sits sleeping in his chair.

[Draw the curtain : the king sits sleeping, his sword by his side. Enter Austria, before whom cometh Ambition, and bringing him before the chair, King John in sleep, maketh signs to avoid, and holdeth his own crown fast with both his hands.]

Friar. Ambition, that had ever waited on king John
Now brings him Austria, easy to be ta'en,
Being wholly tam'd by Richard's warlike hand,
And bids him add that dukedom to his crown :
But he puts by Ambition, and contemns
All other kingdoms but the English crown,
Which he holds fast as if he would not lose.

[Enter Constance, leading Young Arthur : both offer to take the crown ; but with his foot he overturneth them : to them cometh Insurrection, led by the F. K. and L, menacing him, and leads the child again to the chair ; but he only layeth hand on his sword and with his foot overthroweth the child, whom they take up as dead ; and Insurrection flying they mournfully bear in the body.]*

Friar. The lady and the child that did ascend,
Striving in vain to take the crown from John,
Were Constance and her son the Duke of Britaine,
Heir to the elder brother of the king :
Yet he sleeps on, and with a little spurn
The mother and the prince doth overturn.
Again, when Insurrection them assists,
Stirr'd by the French king and the wronged earl,
Whose troth-plight wife king John had ta'en to wife,
He only claps his hand upon his sword,
Mocketh their threatenings, and in their attempts
The harmless prince receives recureless death,
Whom they, too late, with bootless tears lament.

* "Led by F. K. and L." means, as afterwards appears, the French King, and Lord Hugh de Brun, Earl of North March.

Enter Queen with two Children borne after her: she ascends, and seeing no motion, she fetcheth her Children one by one; but seeing yet no motion, she descendeth wringing her hands, and departeth. Enter Matilda in a mourning veil, reading on a book, at whose coming he starteth, and sitteth upright: as she passeth by he smiles, and folds his arms as if he did embrace her: being gone, he starts suddenly and speaks.

King. Matilda! stay Matilda, do but speak!
Who's there? Entreat Matilda to come back.

*Enter BONVILLE.**

Bonville. Who would you have, my lord?

King. Why, my Lord Bonville, I would have Matilda,
That but even now pass'd by toward the door.

Bonville. I saw her not, my lord.

King. Hadst thou a lover's eye,
A gnat, a mote, a shadow thou would'st spy.

Come, follow me; she cannot be so far,

But I shall overtake her: come, away! [Exit.

Friar. The last appearance shadow'd the fair Queen,
And her two children, at whose sight King John
Shewed neither sign nor shew of passion:

But when the sun came masked in a cloud,

And veiled beauty, join'd with chastity,

Appeared in Matilda's lovely shape,

He starts, he clasps, he wakes, he calls, he seeks

The shadow of that substance he affects.

To her he sues, but she his suit rejects;

To him she sues, but he her suit neglects:

He sues to be her love; she doth despise:

She sues to live a maid, which he denies.

What follows of this wilfull will and shall,

This no and nay, this quenchless, bootless fire,

This cold affection, and this hot desire,

The act itself shall tell; and the poor Friar

Your partial favours humbly doth require. [Exit.

* The entrance of Bonville is omitted in the 4to. 1601.

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Sound trumpets. Enter KING, BONVILLE, SALISBURY—
LORDS.**

King. Now I perceive this only was a dream.
Divine Matilda's angel did appear,
Deck'd like a vestal ready for heaven's quire,
And to this earthly trunk will not come near.
Well, let her go: I must, 'ifaith, I must,
And so I will. King's thoughts should be divine;
So are Matilda's, so henceforth shall mine.

Old Aubery. So doing, peace shall wait upon y^{our}
crown,
And blessing upon blessing shall befall.

King. It's true my lord: I know full well there sh^{all}

Salisbury. Your people will wax proud of such a ki^{ng}
That of himself is king, lord of his thoughts;
Which by assertion of philosophers,
Is held to be the greatest empery.

King. And they said wisely, noble Aubery.

Salisbury. Then will Fitzwater, with his gallant troo^p]
Again keep triumphs in the English court;
Then will Matilda——

King. Matilda! what of her?

Salisbury. Like a bright star adorn the lovely train^e
Of beauteous ladies which attend the Queen,
Whose only beauty equalleth them all.

King. Like an old fool, whose dim eyes, wanting sight,
Compar'st the sun to common candle light.

Salisbury. Pardon, my liege, I do confess, her fair^t

* These *Lords*, as we afterwards find, are old Aubery de Vere, Hubert, and Mowbray.

† Lodge was in the habit of using the adjective for the substantive, especially *fair* for *fairness*: one example is enough.

“Some, well I wot, and of that some full many,
Wisht or my *faire* or their desire were lesse.”

Scilla's Metamorphosis, 1589.

See also note 16 to *The Wounds of Civil War*, D. O. P. vol. viii.

Shakespeare may be cited in many places besides the following.

Exceeds all these as far as day doth night.

King. Grossly alluded : night by moon, by stars
By wandering fires, exhaled meteors,
By artificial lights, by eyes of beasts,
And little glow-worms glimpsing in the dark,
Hath somewhere brightness, lightness ; and sometime,
Under each horizon in all parts clear :
But they at no time, no where, can be said
To be less dark than dungeon darkness is,
Pitch-colour'd, ebon-fac'd, blacker than black,
While her fair eyes give beauty to bright day.

Salisbury. To hear the queen thus prais'd works my content.

King. The queen !

Oh, had I such a thought I would repent. [*to himself.*]

Salisbury. Further my lord——

King. What, shall we further wade ?

I fear I shall be tired with this jade.

Salisbury. The common-wealth will flourish and increase.

King. Good Salisbury,* of those things now hold your peace,

And take the pains to fetch in Isabel.

I have strange tidings sent me out of France,
Which she will take, I know, in as good part,
As I accept her praise. Fetch her, I say.

[*Exit Salisbury.*]

What, is the old fool gone ? now go thy way.

What think'st thou of him, Hubert ? tell me, man.

Hubert. As of a good old gentleman, my lord,
That speaks but what he thinks, and thinks you think
As he doth ; and, I warrant you,

—— “ My decayed fair

A sunny look of his would soon repair.”

Comedy of Errors, Act ii. sc. 1.

See Steevens's note on the above passage.

* The King calls him in the old copy “ good Oxford,” but Oxford is not present, and from what follows we see that the command was given to Salisbury. The same mistake is again made by Hubert in this scene. Salisbury must be pronounced *Sal'sb'ry*.

Will not conceal those praises from the Queen,
Which, as he deems, you utter'd in her praise.

King. I would have them believe it so, indeed;
But I protest 'tis no part of my creed.

Hubert. I'faith, your grace did Salisbury's years great
wrong,

To curtail his good work, that seem'd so long :
He, peradventure, would have brought in more,
After his preface, to rich plenty's store.
Perchance he would have shew'd dame vanity,
That in your court is suffered hourly ;
And bade you punish ruffians with long hair,
New fashions, and such toys. A special care
Has that good man : he turns the statute book ;
About his hall and chambers, if you look,
The moral virtues in fair effigy
Are lively painted : moral philosophy
Has not a sentence, be it great or small,
But it is painted on his honour's wall.

Enter QUEEN and SALISBURY.

King. Peace, peace ! he comes : now let's be silent all.

Salisbury. I tell you, I was proud of his good words.

Queen. God hold them, Salisbury ; for it's often seen,
A reconciled foe small good affords.

Salisbury. Oh, forbear ! trust me,
I gage my honour he doth hold you dear.

King. How cheer you, Isabel ? The Earl your spouse
Hath sent defiance to the King your husband,
And, like a tried tall soldier, fled his holds
In Marchland ; where he knows, despite of him
And all the men that he therein can raise,
King John could have sent dogs enow to tear
Their ill arm'd bodies piece-meal, ere his hands
Should with base blood have stain'd their noble hands.
And whither is this worshipful good earl
(This first love, old love, new love, if you will)
Gone, thinks your ladyship ? forsooth, good man,
To Normandy ; and there he stirs up coals,
And urgeth strong aid for confederates,
Who, as he says, are treacherously disposed.

Queen. If he do so the greater is his sin.
For man, I have no interest in him.

King. But he hath had in you, as it should seem,
se would he not make sonnets of your brow,
our eye, your lip, your hand, your thigh.
plague upon him ! how came he so nigh ?
ay, now you have the curst quean's counterfeit :
rough rage you shake, because you cannot rave.
it answer me : why should the Bedlam slave
rittle a whole poem to your kiss,
alling it cherry, ruby, this and this ?
tell you, I am jealous of your love,
hich makes me break into this passion.
ere's the kind noble Aubery de Vere,
nows what I speak is true.
y lord, my lord ! I do appeal to you,
re these things to be borne ?

Salisbury. No, by the rood :
hese love rhines are the tokens of small good.

Hubert. Why, my good lord, was never poetry
ffer'd unto a lady's patronage ?

Salisbury. Yes, but not taken.

Hubert. Yes, and taken too.
hough muddy slaves, whose balladizing rhimes
ith words unpolished shew their brutish thoughts,
aming their maukins in each lustful line,
et no celestial beauty look awry,
hen well-writ poems, couching her rich praise,
re offer'd to her unstain'd virtuous eye :
or poetry's high sprighted sons will raise
rue beauty to all wish'd eternity.
herefore, my lord, your age is much to blame
o think a taken poem lady's shame.

Salisbury. You see the King, that's better read than you,
nd far more wrong'd than I, takes it not well.

King. Yes, but I do : I think not Isabel
be worse for any writing of Lord Brun's.*

* In the old copy it stands thus :

“ Yes, but I do : I think not Isabel, Lord,
The worse for any writing of Brun's.”

ie word “ Lord,” by some accident has been transferr'd from the
t to the first of the two lines, to the injury of the sense and metre.

Salisbury. Will you ha' the truth my lord? I think so too;

And though I be an old man, by my sword,
My arm shall justify my constant word.

Queen. After a long storm in a troublous sea,
The pilot is no gladder of a calm,
Than Isabel to see the vexed looks
Of her lov'd lord chang'd into sweet aspects.

King. I will not tell thee what a world of foes
For thy love (dear love) rise against my life.
Matilda's love; few swords will fight for thee.

[to himself]

I will not number up the many woes
That shall be multiplied: strife upon strife
Will follow; but to shun ensuing ills,
I'll take such pledges as shall please me ask
Of each proud baron dwelling in the realm.
Bruce, kinsman and the deputy to March,
Hath a high-minded lady to his wife,
An able son for arms, and a less boy
That is the comfort of his father's life.
Madam, I know you love the lady well,
And of her wealth you may be bold to build,
By sending you four hundred white milch kine,
And ten like-colour'd bulls to serve that herd;
So fair, that every cow did I see seem,
And every bull Europa's ravisher.
To friend myself with such a subject's truth,
Thus I command: you and Earl Salisbury
Shall, with what speed conveniently ye may,
Hie ye to Guildford: there the lady lies,
And her sons too, as I am told by spies.
All that she hath, I know, she calleth your's;
All that she hath, I gladly would call mine,
If she abuse ye: if she use ye well,
For ever be what she retains her own.
Only go by, as queens in progress do,
And send me word how she receiveth you.

Queen. Well, I avouch she will, before I go:
Far be it, John should prove Lord Bruce's foe.

Come, noble Salisbury I long to be at Guildford.

Salisbury. In such a business, madam, so do I.

[*Exeunt.*

King. Go on, good stales:* now Guildford is mine own!

Hubert, I charge you take an hundred horse,
And follow unto Guildford castle gates.

The Queen pretend you come to tend upon,
Sent carefully from us: when you are in,

Boldly demand the lady for her sons,

For pledges of her husband's faith and her's:

Whom when ye have upon the castle seize,

And keep it to our use until we come.

Meanwhile let me alone with Hugh, your son,

To work a wonder, if no prodigy;

But, whatsoe'er, it shall attempted be.

Hubert. Even that which to your majesty

May seem contentful, therefore I agree.

King. Go then to Guildford, and a victor be.

[*Exit Hubert.*

Mowbray, our mask: are you and Chester ready?

Mowbray. We will before your grace, I warrant you.

King. How think'st of it, Mowbray?

Mowbray. As on a mask: but for our torch bearers,
Hell cannot rake so mad a crew as I.

King. Faith, who is chief?

Mowbray. Will Brand, my lord;

But then your Grace must curb his cruelty:

The rein once got, he's apt for villany.

King. I know the villain is both rough and grim;
But as a tie-dog I will muzzle him.

I'll bring him up to fawn upon my friends,

And worry dead my foes. But to our mask.

I mean this night to revel at the feast,

Where fair Matilda graceth every guest;

And if my hidden courtesy she grace,

* See the notes of Dr. Johnson, Steevens and other commentators on the words in the *Comedy of Errors*, Act II. sc. 1. "Poor I am but his stale."

Old Baynard's Castle, good Fitzwater's place,
 John will make rich, with royal England's wealth :
 But if she do not, not those scatter'd bands,
 Dropping from Austria and the Holy Land,
 That boast so much of glorious victories,
 Shall stop the inundations of those woes,
 That like a deluge I will bring on them.
 I know the crew is there, banish all fears :
 If wronged they shall be our's, if welcome theirs.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Enter FITZWATER, and his SON : OLD BRUCE and
 YOUNG BRUCE, and call forth MATILDA.**

Fitzwater. Why how now, votary ! still at your book ?
 Ever in mourning weeds ? For shame, for shame !
 With better entertainment cheer our friends.
 Now, by the blest cross, you are much to blame
 To cross our mirth thus ; you are much to blame, I say.
 Good lord ! hath never woe enough of welladay ?
 Indeed, indeed,
 Some sorrow fits, but this is more than need.

Matilda. Good father, pardon me :
 You saw I sate the supper and the banquet ;
 You know I cannot dance ; discourse I shun,
 By reason that my wit, but small before,
 Comes far behind the ripe wits of our age.

Young Bruce. You'll be too ripe for marriage,
 If you delay by day and day, thus long.
 There is the noble Wigmore, Lord of the March
 That lies on Wye, Lug, and the Severn streams :
 His son is like the sun's sire's Ganymede,
 And for your love hath sent a lord to plead.

* The stage directions are often given very confusedly, and take by themselves unintelligibly, in the old copy, of which this instance may serve as a specimen : it stands thus in the 4to. "Enter Fitzwater and his Son Bruce, and call forth his daughter."

His absence I did purpose to excuse,

Enter LEICESTER.

But Leicester is the man for him that sues.

Fitzwater. My cousin Bruce hath been your broker,
Leicester;

At least hath broke the matter to my girl.

Leicester. Oh, for a barber at the time of need,
Or one of these that dresses periwigs,
To deck my grey head with a youthful hair!

But I must to't. Matilda thus it is:

Say can ye love me? I am Wigmore's son.

Matilda. My cousin said he look'd like Ganymede;
But you, but you—

Leicester. But I, but I, you say,
Am rather like old Chremes in a play;*
But that's a nice objection: I am he,
But by attorneyship made deputy.

Matilda. He's never like to speed well, all his life,
That by attorney sues to win a wife:
But grant you are whom you seem nothing like,
Young Wigmore, the heir to this noble lord,
He for his son hath sent us ne'er a word.

Old Bruce. If you grant love when his son doth woo,
Then in your jointure he'll send, say, and do.

Young. Bruce. And for a doer cousin, take my word:
Look for a good egg, he was a good bird;
Cock o' the game, i'faith, never fear.

Matilda. I, but I fear the match will fall out ill,
Because he says his son is named Will.

Fitzwater. And why, good daughter? hath some
palmister,
Some augur, or some dreaming calculator,
(For such, I know, you often hearken to)
Been prating 'gainst the name? go to, go to;
Do not believe them. Leicester fall to woo.

* Alluding most likely to the *Andria* of Terence, which had been translated twice before this play was acted; the first time anonymously printed (as it is supposed) by J. Rastell; secondly by Maurice Kiffin, in 1588.

Matilda. I must believe my father ; and 'tis you,
That if I ought misdid, reprov'd me still,
And chiding said, "you're wedded to your will."

Fitzwater. God, for thy mercy ! have ye catch'd me
there ?

Wigmore is William, woman. Leicester, speak :
Thou art the simplest wooer in the world.

Leicester. You have put me out, and she hath took
me down ;

You with your talk, she with her ready tongue.
You told me I should find her mild and still,
And scarce a word came from her in an hour :
'Then did I think I should have all the talk,
Unhinder'd by your willingness to help,
Unanswer'd 'till I had no more to say ;
And then—

Young Bruce. What then ?
She with a courtly court'sy saying nay.

Matilda. Your friend's attorney might have gone
his way

With as great credit as did that orator,
Which handling an oration some three hours,
Ill for the matter, worse than bad for phrase,
Having said *diri*, look'd, and found not one,
To praise or dispraise his oration ;
For wearied with his talk they all were gone.

Fitzwater. Now, by my troth, if any troth I have,
I am as merry at Matilda's mirth,
As I was glad to see her first day's birth.
For 'till this hour, so help me Holidom,*
Since the too timely death of Huntington,
Not a blithe word had passage through her lips.

Leicester. See what a pleasing humour wooers bring.

Young Bruce. Oh, but ye leave too soon.

Leicester. Yet she avers,

* *Holidom* or *halidom* according to Minshieu (Dicty. 1617) is "an old word used by old country women, by manner of swearing by my *halidome* ; of the Saxon word *haligdome*, *ex halig*, *sanctum*, and *dome*, *dominium* aut *judicium*." Shakespeare puts it into the mouth of the host in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Act iv. scene 2.

I stand too long : shall I chuse your's or her's ?

Matilda. Either forbear, I pray ye, for a while.

*Enter RICHMOND.**

Welcome Lord Richmond.

Richmond. What doth Matilda smile,
That still like silence solitary sat ?
Then, off with widow's weeds, and teach your feet
That have forgot for want of exercise,
And by the means your sorrow had no mean)
To tread a measure, for a gallant crew
Of courtly maskers landed at the stairs ;
Before whom, unintreated, I am come,
And have prevented, I believe, their page,
Who with his torch is enter'd.

Fitzwater. Richmond, thanks,
If you have aught to say about the maskers.
Beseech the gentlemen to enter in,
For they are welcome guests to old Fitzwater.

[Exit Messenger.]

Son, son, I pray you fetch the ladies in :
We have been talking here about a match,
And left our noble friends in discontent.

Richmond. Nay, by my faith, we had much merri-
ment,
Yet thought it long you neither came nor sent.

[Matilda faints, and sits down.]

Fitzwater. How now, Matilda ? pray thee, cheer thee,
girl.

Matilda. I thought it was a lightening before death,
Too sudden to be certain. Good pleasure, stay.

Enter LADIES.

Wilt thou not, wanton ? churl, then go thy way.

Richmond. What, chang'd so soon ? so soon fallen
to your dumps ?
Cheerly ! the mask comes in. *[Enter the Mask.]* Oh
God, this veil
And look fit not this sport.

* The entrance of Richmond clearly takes place here, but in the 4to. he is said to come in with Leicester.

Matilda. I'll leave it.

Leicester. Nay,
For your love William's sake, fair maiden stay !
[*Dance : maskers take each a lady, John,*
*Matilda, but refusing, father.**

Fitzwater. This is no courtship, daughter ; be not
nice,
You both abuse him and disparage us.
His fellows had the ladies they did chuse,
And well you know here's no more maids than Maud : †
Yourself are all our store. I pray you, rise,
Or, by my faith, I say you do us wrong.

Matilda. I will do what you will. Lead, lead your
dance.

King. You know me by my speech.

Matilda. I, my liege, I. Oh, that temptation's tongue
Had no where to be plac'd but in your head !

King. Well, say I have her tongue, had I not need,
When you have both her eyes, nay, all her shape,
Able to tempt even Jove himself to rape ?

Matilda. Good my lord, leave, or I will leave the
place.

[*Dance again ; and in the first course Matilda flings
from him : John follows.*

Fitzwater. Dance out your galliard : God's dear
hollybread !

Y' are too forgetful. Dance, or by my troth,
You'll move my patience more than I will speak.

[*She unwilling, John roughly pulls her.*
Nay soft, unmanner'd sir ; you are too rough :
Her joints are weak, your arms are strong and tough.
If ye come here for sport, you welcome be,
If not, better your room than such bad company.

[*John threatens him by signs.*
Dost threaten me ? then will I see thy face.

* Meaning that her father Fitzwater speaks, and thus reproves
her for her reluctance. The whole account of the mask is confused
in the old copy, and it is not easy to make it much more intelligible
in the reprint.

† This is a proverb. In Camden's Remains, by Philpot, 1636,
p. 308, it is given ; " There's no more maids than Maukin."

King. And so thou shalt. Look on me, rebel lord !
Thou that wert late a factious ring-leader,
And in the open-field gav'st me fierce fight :
Art thou again gathering another head,
That with such rudeness thou dost entertain
The gentle coming of thy sovereign ?

Fitzwater. My dread lord, hear me, and forgive this
fault.

What I have erst done long since you forgave :
If I did lead the barons in the field,
The barons chose me, when they could not chuse
But make some leader, you were so misled.
When better thoughts enter'd your royal breast,
We then obey'd you as our sovereign head.

King. You did even what you list, and so do still :
I am the king, but you must have your will.
The plain truth is, we are not come in sport,
Though for our coming this was our best cloke ;
For if we never come 'till you do send,
We must not be your guest while banquets last.
Contentious brawls you hourly send to us ;
But we may send and send, and you return,
This lord is sick, that pained with the gout,
He rid from home. You think I find not out
Your close confederacies : yes, I do, no doubt.

Leicester. If there be here a close confederate,
God's vengeance light upon him with my hate.

King. No, you are open, Leicester, that I know.

Chester. I, by the lord, my lord, your open foe.

Leicester. By thy lord's lord, and mine, proud Ralph
of Chester,

Thou durst not say so, wert thou from the king.

Mowbray. Yes, but he dares and shall.

Richmond. Mowbray, if you stand by,
He dares perchance ; else will the dastard fly.

Chester. My own sword shall maintain my tongue's
true speech ;
For it is not frequented to such lies,
As wrangling Leicester, and proud Richmond use :
It cannot set out, like a thundering drum,

Or roaring cannon, stuff'd with nought but brags,
The multitudes of seas dyed red with blood,*
And famous cities into cinders turn'd,
By their two armed arms.

King. I, Chester;
And then they shew us rags, torn off, belike,
From poor decayed ladies' petticoats;
For neither bill, nor feather'd shot, nor pike
Make half, nor any, of those rents they have.
These, patch'd together, fasten'd unto staves,
They will not stick to swear have been advanc'd
Against the Sophi, Soldan, and the Turk.

Leicester. Do not maintain proud Chester, my life's
liege:

Your words I must put up; his if I bear——

King.† Yes, you shall bear them, bear, and yet not
bite:

We have you muzzled now. Remember once
You brav'd us with your bombard boasting words.
Come briefly, Leicester, Richmond, both Fitzwaters,
Bruce,

Deliver up your swords immediately;
And either yield your bodies to our hands,
Or give such pledges, as we shall accept,
Unto our steward, Winchester, with speed.

Leicester. I will not leave my arms, nor break my
word

Except I be provok'd: your liege-man I am sworn;
That oath is pledge enough. If you mislike——

King. Thou hear'st me say, I do.

Leicester. And I reply,
That pledge refus'd, I have no more for you.

Richmond. And Richmond says as noble Leicester
saith.

* This line will remind the reader of Shakespeare's "multitudin-
ous seas incarnardine," in *Macbeth*, Act ii. scene 2.

† This answer unquestionably belongs to the king, and is not, as th
4to. gives it, a part of what Leicester says. It opens with an allusion
to the crest of Leicester, similar to that noticed in the *Downfall*
Huntington.

have we plighted fame and faith :
being scorn'd, returns to us again,
the king's own mouth we are discharged.

Fitzwater, what say you ?

ter. What pledge desires my liege ?

I ask your stubborn daughter.

Bruce. That were a gage
gaged.

ter. Peace, thou headstrong boy.

me, sovereign ; all my power is your's ;
as you may command, my life you may :
men too, I know, with both their lives,
silly adventure death's worst wrongs,
in service as true subjects should ;
honourable fame, true chastity——

Make no exceptions : yield her up to me,
or ever for my enmity.

ter. Nay then, Fitzwater tells your majesty,
I am wrong ; and well will let you wit,
I defend his honour to the death.

And, Bruce, you are no otherwise disposed :
not give your sons to me for pledge.

I have but one, being my lesser boy,
that Guildford : for my other son——

He braves me with the rest.

This night, and there's no sun to swear by,
God's son ; and by him I here protest
that storm this night to raise

I will not cease, while England giveth rest
to vile traitors. Bruce, I'll begin with you ;
faith, as true as God is true.

[Exit king, cum suis.]

ter. Then shall a storm be rais'd against a
storm,

pest be with tempest beaten back.

ter. But this firm island, like the sea will toss.
My goodly buildings go to wrack ;
My widow weep her dying son,
My mother to her weeping babes
uncomfortably, " children, peace,

Your crying unto me is all in vain,
Dead is my husband, your poor father slain !”

Young Bruce. We cannot help it, uncle.

Richmond. No, you see
Entreats and humble suits have now no power,
But lust and wrath the kingdom do devour.

Bruce. Me he did menace first, and much I fear
He will to Guildford, and besiege my wife.

Fitzwater. Oh, hie to save her! Richmond, ride with him.

Richmond. Let us away, Bruce, lest we come too late,
And with us take some score of men well arm'd.

[*Exeunt Richmond and Bruce.*]

Fitzwater. Do : Leicester and myself will keep the
city,
Till we are furnish'd with an able army.
Your nephew, Bruce, shall take an hundred armed men,
And post to Hertford castle with your sister.
Sith wrong will wake us, we will keep such watch,
As, for his life, he shall not hurt us bring.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter QUEEN, BRUCE'S LADY, HUBERT, SALISBURY.

Queen. Be comforted, good madam, do not fear,
But give your son as pledge unto the king:
Yourself at court may keep him company.

Lady Bruce. I am betray'd! alas, I am betray'd!
And little thought your highness had been bent
So much against me for my many loves,
As to prepare an entrance for my foe.

Queen. As I shall live in heaven, I did not know
Of Hubert's coming. But lament not this :
Your son you say is gone ; what fear you then ?

Lady Bruce. Oh, madam, murder, mischief, wrongs
of men
I fear, I fear—what is't I do not fear,
Sith hope is so far off, despair so near ?

Salisbury. Answer me, good Hubert, I pray thee,
Hubert, do ;

What think you of this matter? may I on your word
Persuade the woman that all things are well?

Hubert. You may persuade her if you can my lord;
For I protest I know no other thing,
But that the king would have him for a pledge
Of the Lord Bruce's faith.

Salisbury. And reason too.
Now by my honour Hubert I protest
It is good reason: Bruce, I tell you plain,
Is no sound cloke to keep John from the rain.
I will go to her.

Hubert. Do, good simple earl.
If not by threats, nor my entreats she yield,
Thy brain is barren of invention,
Dried up with care; and never will she yield
Her son to thee, that having power want'st wit.

Lady Bruce. I overhear thee, Hubert.

Salisbury. So do I, dame Bruce;
But stir no coals: the man is well belov'd,
And merits more than so.

Lady Bruce. But I will answer.
Hubert, thou fatal keeper of poor babes,
That are appointed hostages for John,*
Had I a son here, as I have not one,
(For yesterday I sent him into Wales)
Think'st thou I would be so degenerate,
So far from kind, to give him unto thee?
I would not I protest: thou know'st my mind.

Salisbury. Lady you fear more than you need to do:
Indeed you do; in very deed you do.
Hubert is wrong'd about the thing you mean,
About young Arthur: Oh, I thought 'twas so:
Indeed the honest, good, kind, gentleman
Did all he might for safeguard of the child.

Queen. Believe me, madam Bruce, the man is wrong'd.

Lady Bruce. But he wrongs me to keep my castle
thus,

Disarming my true servants, arming his.
Now, more of outrage! comes what shall I do?

* This and other passages refer, probably, to the old play of *King John*, printed in 1591.

Enter the KING, MOWBRAY, WINCHESTER, CHESTER.

King. Oh, this is well! Hubert, where's Bruce's son?

Lady Bruce. Where thou shalt never see him, John.

King. Lady, we will have talk with you anon.

- Where is he Hubert?

Hubert. Hid, or fled, my lord:

We can by no means get her to confess.

Salisbury. Welcome to Guildford, Salisbury's liefest lord.*

King. You scarce give welcome ere I bid you go;
For you, my lord, the queen, and Winchester,
Shall march to Hertford. Sweet Isabel,
And if thou love me, play the amazon.
Matilda that hath long bewitch'd mine eye
Is, as I hear by spials, now in Hertford castle:
Besiege her there; for now her haughty father
Ruffians it up and down, and all the brood
Of viperous traitors whet their poison'd teeth,
That they may feed on us that foster them.

Go forward, and go with you victory;

Which to assure, my powers shall follow you.

Salisbury. Did I not tell you this? then trust me next.
Nay, he is chang'd, and cares no more for her,
Than I do, madam.

King. Begone, I say begone!
Your speed rich victory attendeth on:
But your delay

May give your foes the happy glorious day.

Queen. One boon, my liege, and part.

King. Be brief.

Queen. Shew that poor lady pity, I beseech. [*Exeunt.*

King. I will indeed. Come, lady, let us in.

You have a son; go in and bring him me,
And for the queen's sake I will favour ye.

Lady Bruce. I have no son. Come, come; come in
and search,

And if you find him wretched may I be. [*Exit.*

King. Chester and Hubert, see you keep good watch
Nor far off do I hear a warlike sound:

* In this line, in the old copy, Salisbury is made to call himself Oxford.

Bruce on my life ! look to't while I go in
To seek this boy, for needs we must have him.
Come with us, Mowbray.

SCENE II.

Enter BRUCE, RICHMOND, SOLDIERS.

Richmond. The castle gates are shut. What ho,
what ho !

You that are servants to the lady Bruce,
Arise, make entrance for your lord and friends.

*Enter, or above, HUBERT, CHESTER.**

Hubert. We will make issue ere ye enter here.
Who have we there ? Richmond and Bruce, is't you ?
What, up so soon ? are ye so early here ?
In you, i'faith, the proverb's verified,
Y'are early up, and yet are ne'er the near.

Richmond. The worse our fortune. Bruce, let us go
hence ;

We have no power to fight, nor make defence.

Chester. What, Richmond, will you prove a runaway ?

Richmond. From thee good Chester ? now, the lord
defend !

Bruce, we will stay and fight.

Bruce. 'Tis to no end :

We have but twenty men, and they be tired.

But ere we do retire, tell me, Lord Hubert,

Where are my wife and son ?

* The 4to. reads "Enter or above Hugh, Winchester." *Enter or above* means, that they may either enter on the stage, or stand above on the battlements, as may suit the theatre. With regard to the names *Hugh* and *Winchester*, they are both wrong : they ought to be *Hubert* and *Chester* who have been left by the king to "keep good watch : " when, too, afterwards, Chester asks,

"What, Richmond, will you prove a runaway ?"

The answer in the old copy is—

"From thee good *Winchester* ? now, the lord defend !"

It ought to be—

"From thee good *Chester* ? now the lord defend !"

and it is clear that the measure requires it. The names throughout are very incorrectly given, and probably the printer composed from a copy in which some alterations had been made in the *dramatis personæ*, but incompletely. Hence the perpetual confusion of *Salisbury* and *Oxford*.

Hubert. Your wife is here ; your son we cannot find

Bruce. Let son and wife, high heavens, your comfort find !

[*Bruce*]

SCENE III.*

Enter KING, MOWBRAY, LADY BRUCE.

Chester. Bruce hath been here, my lord.

King. I, let him go ;

We have good pledges : though we see but one,
The other we are sure will come anon.

Mowbray. I do advise you, for your own discharge,
Deliver up your son unto the king.

King. Nay, let her chuse. Come hither, Mowbray.

[*The King and Mowbray whisper.*]

Hubert. The King is angry : Lady Bruce, advise you.

Lady Bruce. What ! be advis'd by thee
To have my loving kind and pretty boy,
Given to an unkind killer of sweet boys ?

Chester. Madam, go to ; take counsel of your friends.
I warrant you the king will use him well.

Lady Bruce. I, as he us'd his nephew, Arthur, Chester.

God bless my child from being used so !

Mowbray. Sir Hubert, what are all the people
voided,

The horses and the cattle turned forth ?

Hubert. Mowbray, they be

Mowbray. Then will I do the king's commandment.

Lady Bruce. What will he do ? good lord ! what will
he do ?

Mowbray, I pray you, what is't you will do ?

Mowbray. Why, fire the castle.

Lady Bruce. The castle, Mowbray ? tarry, tarry,
man !

Hold me not Chester ! gentle Mowbray stay !

Good Hubert, let me go !

Mowbray. You must not go :

The king is mov'd, and will not hear you speak.

* The scene changes from the outside to the inside of the castle.

Lady Bruce. But he shall hear me! pity me, king
John!

Call Mowbray back: hear me for pity's sake!

Regard the Lady Bruce's woeful cry!

King. What dost thou ask?

Lady Bruce. First call back Mowbray.

King. Stay, Mowbray. Now, be brief.

Lady Bruce. I have some linen garments, jewels,
'tires,

Pack'd in a hamper here within the lodge:

Oh, let me save it from consuming fire!

King. And is this all?

Lady Bruce. It's all the little all I here have left.

King. Away! set fire! linen and trash!

Lady Bruce. Once more hear me! there's a precious
gem,

You have not any richer in all the realm:

If fire do blemish it, art never more

To his true colour can the same restore.

King. Fetch it.

Two of ye help her with her hamper hither.

Lady Bruce. Nay, nay, one will suffice: the jewel
if I save,

Is all I ask.

[Exit with Chester.

King. We shall her jewel have.

Hubert. She is very fearful I should keep her son.

Lady Bruce. [Within.] Ye do, ye do!

King. Alas, good lady! hark: Chester and she are
chiding.

Enter CHESTER and she, leading the boy.

Lady Bruce. Let go his hand! Is this a paw, think
you,

To hold a tender hand in? fie for shame!

A nobleman so churlish! Look, I pray,

His arms are gristles.

King. How now, Lady Bruce!

Doth Chester hurt the jewel of your joy?

Now, by my troth, it is a pretty boy?

Lady Bruce. I; knew your majesty as much as I,
You would say more.

King. Well, he and you of us no wrong shall have,

But stay in Windsor Castle with Sir Walter Blunt,
And honorably be us'd ; provided still,
Your husband and your son obey our will.

Lady Bruce. For this great mercy, if they disobey,
Myself will chide them. Fortune follow John,
And on his foes fall swift destruction !

King. Come ! let us now after the Queen and Salisbury.
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter the QUEEN, SALISBURY, Soldiers.

Queen. Now are ye, worthy and resolved men,
Come to the cage where the unclean birds bide,
That tire* on all the fair flight in the realm.
Summon this castle, or (to keep my words)
This cage of night-hid owls light-flying birds—

[*Offer to summon.*]

Enter YOUNG BRUCE, MATILDA, Soldiers.

Salisbury. Stay drum ! thou needst not summon
willing men,
Or rather wilfull ; for such methinks they be.

Queen. See ye yon baggage, muffled in black weeds :
Those clouds fold in the comet that portends
Sad desolation to this royal realm.
For ever seek to mask her light, good friends :
Let us disrobe her of each little beam,
And then your Phœbus will one Phœbe have,
That while they live shall lend your land true light,
Give joy unto your day, rest to your night.
Assail them ! stay not.

Salisbury. Stay, and assay them first !
I say to you, fair Queen, this fact is foul.
Let not provoking words whet dull-edg'd swords,
But try if we can blunt sharp blades with words.
Fitzwater's nephew, Bruce, I see thee there,
And tell thee it is shame for such a boy
To lead a many able men to fight.
And, modest looking maid, I see you too :

* To *tire* is a term in falconry : from the Fr. *tirer*, in reference to birds of prey tearing what they take to pieces.

An unfit sight to view virginity
Guarded with other soldiers than good prayers.
But you will say the king occasions it:
Say what you will, no king but would take cause
Of just offence.

Yield you, young Bruce, your mother is in hold.

Yield you, young maid, your father is in hold.

Matilda. Will the queen keep me from the lustful
king?

Then will I yield.

Queen. A plague upon this counterfeiting quean.

Matilda. God's blessed mercy! will you still be mad,
And wrong a noble virgin with vile speech?

Salisbury. Let me alone. Matilda, maiden fair,
Thou virgin-spouse, true Huntington's just heir,
Wilt thou come hither? and I do protest,
The Queen, and I to mitigate this war
Will do what thou would'st have.

Matilda. I come.

Bruce. You shall not go. Sound, drums, to war!

Salisbury. Alack, alack, for woe!

Well, God for us, sith it will needs be so.

[*Alarum, fight, stay.*

Salisbury. What stay you for?

Bruce. Matilda's cries do stay us.

Matilda. Salisbury, I come in hope of thy defence.

Bruce. First will I die, ere you shall yield yourself
To any coward lord that serves the king.

Salisbury. Coward, proud boy! Thou find'st me no
such beast,

And thou shalt rue in earnest this rude jest.

[*Fight again. Matilda taken, led by the hair by two
Soldiers.*

Salisbury. Rude hands! how hale you virtuous honor
forth!

You do not well: away!

Now by my faith, ye do not well, I say.

Take her, fair queen, use her as she deserves:

She's fair, she's noble, chaste and debonnair.

I must, according to due course of war,

See that our soldiers scatter not too far,
Lest what care won our negligence may lose. [Erit.

Queen. Is this the Helen, this the paragon,
That makes the English Ilion* flame so fast?

Matilda. I am not she; you see I am not she:
I am not ravish'd yet, as Helen was.
I know not what will come of John's desire,
That rages like the sea, that burns like fire.

Queen. Plain John, proud Joan? I'll tear your
painted face.
Thus, thus I'll use you.

Enter SALISBURY.

Matilda. Do, do, what you will.

Salisbury. How goes this geer? ha! foul fall so foul
a deed!

Poor chaste child of Fitzwater, dost thou bleed?
By God's blest mother! this is more than need;
And more, I tell you true, than I would bear,
Were not the danger of the camp so near.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Messenger. My lord, the foes have gathered head:
Lord Bruce, the father, joineth with the son.

Salisbury. Why, here's the matter: we must spend
our time
To keep your nails from scratching innocence,
Which should have been bestow'd for our defence.
What shall we now do? Help me, holy God!
The foe is come, and we are out of rank.

[Skirmish: *Queen taken, Matilda rescued.*
*Enter OLD BRUCE wounded, led by his Son, and LEI-
CESTER.*

Bruce. Is the field our's?

Young Bruce. I, thanks to noble Leicester.

Bruce. Give God thanks, son: be careful to thy
mother;
Commend me to Fitzwater; love thy brother,
If either arms, or prayers may him recover. [Falls down.
Leicester. How cheers old Bruce?

* The 4to. prints *Ilion, Ilinus*.

Young Bruce. His soul to joy is fled,
His grief is in my bosom buried.

Leicester. His life was dearly bought; for my eyes
saw
A shambles of dead men about his feet,
Sent by his sword unto eternal shade.
With honor bury him. Cease tears, good Bruce.

Young Bruce. Tears help not, I confess, yet must I
weep.
Soldiers, you help to bear him to my tent.

[*Exeunt cum Bruce.*

Enter QUEEN and MATILDA.

Matilda. Be comforted, great Queen: forget my
wrongs.

It was my fortune, and no fault of your's.

Queen. Is she thus mild? or doth she mock my
chance?

Leicester. Queen Isabel,* are you a prisoner?
See what it is to be a soldier.

But what foul hand hath harm'd Matilda's fair?

Speak, honourable maid, who tore thy hair?

Did Salisbury or the Queen this violence?

Matilda. Ungentle grooms first took and tore me
thus,

From whom old Salisbury, chastising their wrong,

Most kindly brought me to this gentle queen;

Who laid her soft hand on my bleeding cheeks,

Gave kisses to my lips, wept for my woe;

And was devising how to send me back,

Even when your last alarum frightened us,

And by her kindness fell into your hands.

Leicester. Which kindness we return: Madam, be
free.

Soldiers, conduct the Queen whither she please.

Queen. Farewell Matilda: if I live, believe,

I will remember this. Oh, how I grieve,

That I should wrong so innocent a maid!

* The 4to. has it *Elsnor*, but it ought to be *Isabel*. The previous entrance of the Queen and Matilda is not marked.

Come, lady, old Fitzwater is not far :
He'll weep to see these scars, full well I know.

Matilda. Would I were from this woeful world —
war !

Sure I will 'scape and to some nunnery go. [Exit —

SCENE V.

Enter KING, SALISBURY, HUBERT.

King. Had you her, then, had you her in your power —

Salisbury. I, marry, had we : we had taken her.

King. Oh, had she been in mine, not all earth's power —
From my power should have freed her !

Salisbury. You are a king, and high are princ —
thoughts :

It may be, with your sight you could have chas'd
A host of armed men ; it may be so :

But we, your subjects, did the best we could.

Yet Bruce the father, backing Bruce the son,
Scatter'd our troops, brought rescue to Matilda,
And took your peerless queen their prisoner.

King. On all the race of Bruces for this wrong
I will have vengeance ! Hubert, call in Brand,

[Exit Hubert.]

My lord of Salisbury, give us leave awhile
To be alone.

Salisbury. I will my liege. Be you comforted ;
The Queen will be recovered, do not fear,
As well as e'er she was.

King. Salisbury, forbear I pray.

Salisbury. Yet for the wrong she did unto Matilda,
I fear, I fear. — [Exit.]

King. The father and the son did rescue her ;
The mother and the son shall rue the deed.
So it shall be ; I am resolv'd thereon.

Matilda, my souls food, those have bereft,
And these of body's food I will bereave.

Enter HUBERT, BRAND.

King. Will Brand.

Brand. Your Majesty. [*Make 'legs.*

King. Less of your court'sy. Hubert, stand aside.
Post speedily to Windsor; take this ring;
Bid Blunt deliver Bruce's wife and child
Into your hands, and ask him for the key
Of the dark tower o'er the dungeon vault:
In that, see you shut up the dam and brat.
Pretend to Blunt that you have left them meat,
Will serve some s'ennight; and unto him say,
It is my will you bring the key away.
And hear you, sir, I charge you on your life,
You do not leave a bit of bread with them.

Brand. I warrant you; let me alone.

King. Come back again with all the speed you may.
[*Exit. Brand.*

Hubert. Some cruel task is pointed for that slave,
Which he will execute as cruelly.

King. No ruth, no pity shall have harbour here,
Till fair Matilda be within these arms.

Enter SALISBURY with the QUEEN.

Salisbury. Comfort, my lord; comfort, my gracious
lord;

Your love is come again!

King. Ah, Salisbury, where?

Salisbury. Here, my dread sovereign.

King. Thou liest, she is not there.

Salisbury. Under correction you wrong my age.
Say, I beseech you, is not this the Queen?

King. I cry you mercy, Salisbury; 'tis indeed.
Where is Matilda?

Queen. Where virtue, chastity, and innocence re-
main;
There is Matilda.

King. How comes she, pray, to be so chaste, so fair,
So virtuous in your eye?

Queen. She freed me from my foes, and never urg'd
My great abuse when she was prisoner.

King. What did you to her?

Queen. Rail'd upon her first,
Then tare her hair and rent her tender cheeks.

King. Oh heaven! was not the day dark at t
foul deed?

Could the sun see without a red eclipse
The purple tears fall from those tyrant wounds?
Out Ethiop, Gypsy, thick-lipp'd blackamoor!
Wolf, tigress! worse than either of them both!

Salisbury. Are you advis'd, my lord?

King. Out, doting Earl!

Could'st thou endure to see such violence,

Salisbury. I tell you plain, my lord, I brook'd it ~~not~~,
But stay'd the tempest.

King. Rend my love's cheeks! that matchless effigy,
Of wonder-working nature's chiefest work:
Tear her rich hair! to which gold wires,
Suns' rays, and best of best compares
(In their most pride) have no comparison.
Abuse her name! Matilda's sacred name!
Oh, barbarous outrage, rudeness merciless!

Queen. I told you, Salisbury, you mistook the king.

Salisbury. I did indeed. My liege lord, give me
leave

To leave the camp.

King. Away old fool! and take with thee that trull;
For if she stay——

Salisbury. Come, lady, come away,
Tempt not his rage. Ruin wrath always brings:
Lust being lord, there is no trust in kings. [Exeunt.

Enter MOWBRAY.

Mowbray. To arms king John! Fitzwater's field is
pitch'd,

About some mile hence on a champain plain.
Chester hath drawn our soldiers in array:
The wings already have begun the fight.

King. Thither we will with wings of vengeance fly,
And win Matilda, or lose victory! [Exeunt.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter LADY BRUCE and her BOY with BRAND.

Lady Bruce. Why did my keeper put us in thy hands?

Wherein have we offended Blunt or thee?

Brand. You need not make these words:

I must remove your lodging; this is all.

Be not afraid: come, come, here is the door.

Lady Bruce. Oh God, how dark it is!

Brand. Go in, go in: it's higher up the stairs.

Lady Bruce. My trembling heart forbids me to go in.

If thou have compassion, tell me true,

What my poor boy and I must trust unto?

Brand. I tell thee true, compassion is my foe;

And have I had of thee compassion.

Be in thy child: as I have faith or troth,

You and thy boy shall be but prisoners,

And I must daily bring you meat and drink.

Lady Bruce. Well, thou hast sworn, and God so give thee light

In this dark place thou rememb'rest us.

For heart, thou laugh'st, and hast not wit to think

On the many fears that me afflict.

Will not in. Help us, assist us, Blunt!

We shall be murdered in a dungeon!

Brand. Cry without cause? I'll have ye in, i'faith.

Lady Bruce. Oh, let my boy and I but dine with Blunt,

And then I will with patience go in.

Brand. Will ye, or nill ye, zounds! ye must go in, I never dine.

Lady Bruce. What say'st thou? never dine!

Brand. No, not with Blunt I mean. Go in, I say; by this hand, ye get no meat to day.

Lady Bruce. My child is hungry: when shall he have meat?

Brand. Why, and ye would go in, immediately.

Lady Bruce. I will go in ; but very much I doubt,
Nor I, nor my poor boy shall e'er come out. [*Exeunt.*
[*He seems to lock a door.*

Brand. Ne'er while ye live, i'faith ! now are they sure.
Cry till their hearts ache no man can them hear.
A miserable death is famishment ;
But what care I ? The king commanded me.

SCENE II.

*Alarum within : excursions : Enter FITZWATER,
BRUCE.*

Fitzwater. Now doth fair fortune offer hope of
speed ;
But howsoe'er we speed, good cousin Bruce,
March with three hundred bows and pikes to Windsor,
Spreading a rumour that the day is our's,
As ours it shall be with the help of heaven.
Blunt loves our part far better than the king's,
And will, I gage my life, upon the news
Surrender up the castle to our use.
By this means shall you help us to a hold,
Howe'er it chance : set free your lady mother,
'That lives in prison there with your young brother.

Bruce. Away, good uncle, to the battle go !
But that a certain good ensues, I know,
For all the world I would not leave you so.

Fitzwater. Away, away !
God send thee Windsor ; us this happy day.

*Alarum still. Enter HUBERT and MATILDA.**

Hubert. You cannot hide yourself, Matilda ; no dis-
guise
Will serve the turn : now must you to the king,
And all these wars will with your presence cease.
Yield you to him, he soon will yield to peace.

Matilda. They say thou took'st some pity of a child,
The king appointing thee to sear his eyes ;
Men do report thee to be just of word,

* Matilda's name is omitted in the old copy, but the errors of this kind are too numerous to be always pointed out.

And a dear lover of my lord the king.
If thou didst that, if thou be one of these,
Pity Matilda prostrate at thy feet.

Hubert. I sav'd young Arthur's eyes, and pity thee ;
My word is just, which I have given the king ;
The king I love, and thee I know he loves :
Compare these, then how can I pleasure thee ?

Matilda. By letting me escape to Dunmow Abbey,
Where I will end my life a votary.

Hubert. And the king die with doting on thy love.

Matilda. No, no : this fire of lust would be soon
laid,

If once he knew me sworn a holy maid.

Hubert. Thy tears and love of virtue have the power
To make me at an instant true and false :
True to distressed beauty and rare chastity ;
False to king John, that holds the sight of thee
Dearer than England or earth's empery.
Go, happy soul, that in so ill an age
Hast such fair beauty for thy heritage :
Yet go not so alone. Dost hear, tall soldier ?

[*Call a Soldier.*

I know thee honest : guide this gentle maid,
To Dunmow Abbey : she is one I know.
I will excuse thee and content thee well.
My signet take, that ye may pass unsearch'd.

Matilda. Kind Hubert, many prayers for this good
deed

Shall on my beads be daily number'd. [*Ereunt.*

Enter LEICESTER, RICHMOND, FITZWATER.

Leicester. Oh, treble heat of honor, toil and rage !
How cheers earl Richmond ? Fitzwater, speak old man.
We are now near together : answer me.

Fitzwater. Leicester, the more our woe ;
The likelier to be taken by the foe.

Richmond. Oh, let not such a thought abuse thy age !
We'll never yield us to the tyrant's rage.

Leicester. But if my girl be yielded —

Leicester. If she be ?

Fitzwater. I, I :

There's no man but shall have his time to die.

Leicester. Now is our hour, which they shall dearly buy.

Enter KING, HUBERT, CHESTER, MOWBRAY.

Richmond. Leicester, we'll stand like three battalions :
What says our noble general thereto ?

Fitzwater. Why, I say do :

While I can, I'll keep my place with you.

King. How now, my bug-bear, will you now submit ?

Leicester. To death, but not to thee.

King. Richmond, nor you ?

Richmond. Earl Richmond will not yield.

King. Methinks, Fitzwater, you should have more wit.

Fitzwater. If it be wit to live, I have no will ;

And so in this my will o'errules my wit.

King. Alarum then ! with weapons will we scourge
Your desperate will, and teach ye to have wit.

[*Fight: drive back the King.*]

King. Of high heroic spirits be they all.
We will withdraw a little and confer,
For they are circled round, and cannot 'scape.

[*withdraw.*]

Richmond. Oh, that we three, who in the sun's arise
Were, like the three Triumvirates * of Rome,
Guides of an host, able to vanquish Rome,
Are now alone, enclos'd with enemies !

Fitzwater. The glory of the world hath no more stay,
But as it comes, it fleets, and fades away.

Leicester. Courage, and let us die ! they come again :
It's Lord Hubert alone. Hubert, what news ? †

Enter HUBERT.

Hubert. This day's fierce slaughter, John, our king,
 laments,
And to you three, great leaders of an host,

* The author probably wrote "*Triumviri* of Rome."

† Nothing can more clearly shew the desperate confusion of names in this play than this line, which in the 4to. stands,

"It's lord *Hugh Burgh* alone : *Hughberr*, what news ?"
In many places Hubert is only called *Hugh*.

That now have not a man at all to lead,
You, worthy captains without companies—

Leicester. Fitzwater! Richmond! by the blessed sun,
Lord Hubert mocks us.

Hubert. By the moon, I do not; and put the blessed
to't,

It is as good an oath as you have sworn.
My heart grieves, that so great hearts as yours be,
Should put your fortunes on a sort* of slaves,
That bring base fear within them to the field.
But to the matter. Sith your state is such,
That without mercy you are sure of death,
(Which I am sure, and well his highness knows,
You do not fear at all) yet he gives grant,
On just conditions you shall save your lives.

Fitzwater. On no condition will I save my life,
Except Matilda be return'd again,
Unblemish'd, unabus'd; and then I yield.

Hubert. She now is where she never will return.

Fitzwater. Never? Oh God! Is my Matilda dead?

Hubert. Dead to the world; dead to this woe she is.
She lives at Dunmow, and is vow'd a nun.

Fitzwater. Do not delude me, Hubert, gentle son.

Hubert. By all the faith and honor of my kin,
By my unstain'd allegiance to the king,
By my own word, that hath reproveless been,
She is at Dunmow.

Fitzwater. Oh, how came she there?

Hubert. When all these fields were walks for rage
and fear

(This, howling like a head of hungry wolves,†
That, scudding as a herd of frightened deer)
When dust, arising like a coal black fog,
From friend divided friend, join'd foe to foe,
Yet neither those, nor these could either know;

* *Sort* is company or collection: See note to p. 21. of *the Down-fall of Huntington*.

† “*Head of hungry wolves*,” is the reading of the original copy: a “*herd of hungry wolves*” would scarcely be proper, but it may have been so written.

Till here and there, through large wide-mouthed wounds
Proud life, even in the glory of his heat,
Losing possession, belch'd forth streams of blood,
Whose spouts in falling made ten thousand drops,
And with that purple shower the dust alaid :
At such a time met I the trembling maid ;
Seeming a dove from all her fellows parted,
Seen, known, and taken ; unseen and unknown,
To any other that did know us both.
At her entreats I sent her safely guided
To Dunmow Abbey ; and the guide return'd
Assures me she was gladly receiv'd,
Pitied, and in his sight did take her oath.

Fitzwater. Hubert, for this thy honourable deed,
I and my house will reverence thy name.

Hubert. Yet, I beseech you, hide it from the king ;
At least, that I convey'd her to the place.

Enter KING, MOWBRAY, CHESTER.

Fitzwater. Hubert I will.

King. What, stand they still on terms ?

Leicester. On honourable terms, on terms of right.
Our lives without our liberty we scorn.

King. You shall have life and liberty, I swear.

Leicester. Then, Leicester bows his knee to his liege
lord,

And humbly begs his highness to beware
Of wronging innocence, as he hath done.

Richmond. The like Richmond desires, and yields
his sword.

King. I do embrace ye both, and hold myself
Richer by a whole realm in having you.

Fitzwater. Much is my wrong ; yet I submit with
these,
Begging free leave to live a private life.

King. Old brands of malice in thy bosom rest :
Thou shalt have leave to leave me, never doubt.
Fitzwater, see thou ship thee strait for France,
And never set thy foot on English shore,
Till I repeal thee. Go ; go hence in peace.

Leicester. Why doth your highness wrong Fitzwater
thus ?

King. I right his wrong : he's weary of the land.

Richmond. Not of the land, but of a public life.

King. Content ye lords : in such quick times as these
We must not keep a drone among our bees.

Fitzwater. I am as glad to go, as you to send :
Yet I beseech this favour of your Grace,
That I may see Matilda ere I part.

King. Matilda ! see Matilda, if thou canst,
Before sunset : stay not another day.

*Fitzwater.** The Abbey walls, that shroud my happy
child,
Appear within her hapless father's sight.
Farewell my sovereign, Leicester, Richmond, Lords ;
Farewell to all : grief gives no way to words.

King. Fitzwater stay : lords, give us leave awhile.
Hubert, go you before unto the abbess,
And signify our coming. Let her bring,
Matilda to her father. (*Exit Hubert.*) Come, old
man ;

Be not too froward, and we shall be friends.
About this girl our mortal jars began,
And, if thou wilt, here all our quarrel ends.

Fitzwater. Reserve my honour, and my daughter's
fame,
And no poor subject that your grace commands
Shall willinger submit, obey, and serve.

King. Do then but this. Persuade thy beauteous
child
To leave the nunnery and return to court,
And I protest from henceforth to forswear
All such conceits of lust as I have borne.

Fitzwater. I will, my lord, do all that I may do ;
But give me leave, in this, to doubt of you.

King. This small thing grant, and ask me any thing ;
Or else die in exile, loath'd of the king.

Fitzwater. You shall perceive I will do what I may.

* In the old copy the four following lines are given to king John.

Enter, on the wall, ABBESS, MATILDA. Re-enter HUBERT.

Hubert. Matilda is afraid to leave the house ;
But lo, on yonder battlement she stands,
But in no case will come within your hands.

King. What ! will my lady abbess wars with us ?
Speak, lady ; wherefore shut you up your gates ?

Abbess. Have we not reason, when an host of men
Hunt and pursue religious chastity ?
King John, bethink thee what thou tak'st in hand,
On pain of interdiction of thy land.
Murderers and felons may have sanctuary,
And shall not honorable maids distress'd,
Religious virgins, holy nuns profess'd,
Have that small privilege ? Now, out upon thee, out !
Holy saint Catherine, shield my virginity !
I never stood in such extremity.

Hubert. My lord, the abbess lies, I warrant you ;
For I have heard there is a monk of Bury,
That once a week comes thither to make merry.

King. Content thee, Hubert ; that same monk and
she,
And the worst come, my instruments shall be.
Good lady abbess, fear no violence ;
There's not one here shall offer you offence.

Fitzwater. Daughter, all this while tears my speech
have staid.
My lord the king, lords all draw near, I pray,
And hear a poor man's parting from his child.
Matilda, still my unstain'd honor's joy,
Fair ornament of old Fitzwater's coat,
Born to rich fortunes, did not this ill age
Bereave thee of thy birthright's heritage,
Thou see'st our sovereign, lord of both our lives,
A long besieger of thy chastity,
Hath scatter'd all our forces, slain our friends,
Razed our castles, left us ne'er a house
Wherein to hide us from his wrathful eye :
Yet God provides ; France is appointed me,
And thou find'st house-room in this nunnery.

Here, if the king should doat as he hath done,
It's sacrilege to tempt a holy nun :
But I have hope, he will not ; yet my fear
So drowns my hope, as I am forced to stay,
And leave abruptly what I more would say.

Matilda. Oh, go not yet, my griev'd heart's comforter !

I am as valiant to resist desire
As ever thou wert worthy in the field.
John may attempt, but if Matilda yield,
Oh then——

Fitzwater. I, then, Matilda, thou dost lose
The former glory of thy chaste resolves. //
These seven years hast thou bid* a martyr's pains,
Resisting in thyself lust-growing fire,
For being mortal sure thou hast desire ;
And five sad winters have their full course run,
Since thou didst bury noble Huntington.
In these years, many months, and many days
Have been consum'd thy virtues to consume.
Gifts have been heralds ; pandars did presume
To tempt thy chaste ears, with their unchaste tongues :
All, in effect, working to no effect ;
For I was still the watchman of thy tower,
The keeper of foul worms from my fair flower.
But now, no more, no more Fitzwater may
Defend his poor lamb from the lion's prey ;
Thy order and thy holy prayers may.
To help thee thou hast privilege by law ;
Therefore be resolute, and nobly die !
Abhor base lust, defend thy chastity.

King. Despatch, Fitzwater : hinder not thy child :
Many preferments do on her await.

Fitzwater. I, girl ; I know thou shall be offer'd
wealth
(Which is a shrewd enticement in sad want)
Great honors to lift up thy low estate,
And glorious titles to eternize thee.

† *Bid* is used here, and often in old writers, for *invited*.

All these do but gild over ugly shame ;
Such wealth, my child, foreruns releaseless need ,
Such honor ever proves dishonorate.
For titles, none comes near a virtuous name :
Oh keep it ever, as thou hast done yet !
And though these dark times should forget thy praise,
An age will come, that shall eternize it.
Bid me farewell, and speak it in a word.

Matilda. Farewell, dear father.

Fitzwater. Oh, farewell, sweet child.
My liege farewell : Leicester, Richmond, Hubert,
Chester and Mowbray, friends and foes, farewell.
Matilda, see thou keep thy spotless fame,
And live eterniz'd, else die soon with shame. [Exit.

Matilda. Amen, amen : father, adieu, adieu !
Grief dwells with me, sweet comfort follow you.

Abbess. Come, daughter, come. This is a woeful sight,
When good endeavors are oppress'd by might.

[Exeunt from above, Abbess, Matilda.]

King. Ah, Hubert, seest thou not the sun go down,
Cloudy and dark ? Matilda, stay ! one word.
She shakes her head, and scornfully says nay.

Richmond. How cheer'st thou Leicester ?

Leicester. Mad, man, at my state,
That cannot raise true honor ruinate.

Enter MESSENGER.

King. I will not be disdain'd. I vow to see
Quick vengeance on this girl for scorning me.

Messenger. Young Bruce, my lord, hath gotten Wind-
sor castle,
Slain Blunt your constable, and those that kept it ;
And finding in a tower his mother dead,
With his young brother starv'd and famished,
That every one may see the rueful sight,
In the thick wall he a wide window makes ;
And as he found them, so he lets them be,
A spectacle to every comer by,
That heaven and earth, your tyrant shame may see.
All people cursing, crying fie upon
The tyrant, merciless inhuman John.

King. Chester and Mowbray, march away to Windsor :
Suppress that traitor Bruce. What if his dam,
In wilful fury, would receive no meat,
Nor suffer her young child any to eat,
Is it our fault ? haste ye with speed away,
And we will follow. Go ; begone, I pray.

[*Exeunt. Chester, Mowbray.*]

Hubert. Oh black and woeful deed ! oh, piteous thing,
When slaves attend the fierce thoughts of a king.

Leicester. My lord, shall we go too ?

King. Leicester and Richmond, I ; I pray ye do.

Leicester. Get I my bear and ragged staff* once more
Rais'd in the field, for these wrongs some shall roar.

[*Exeunt Richmond, Leicester.*]

King. Fetch in the monk of Bury, that I talk'd of,

[*Exit Hubert, for the monk.*]

And bid Will Brand, my instrument of death,
Come likewise in. Convert to raging hate,

Enter MONK, HUBERT, BRAND.

My long-resisted love ! welcome, good Monk.

Monk. Thanks to my liege.

King. Thou hast been long in suit
To be installed abbot of your house,
And in your favour many friends have stirr'd.
Now is the hour that you shall be preferr'd,
Upon condition, and the matter small.
Short shrift to make, good honest confessor,
I love a fair nun, now in Dunmow abbey :
The abbess loves you, and you pleasure her ;
Now if between you two, this pretty lady
Could be persuaded to affect a king,
Your suit is granted, and on Dunmow abbey
I will bestow a hundred marks a year.

Monk. A holy nun ! a young nun, and a lady !
Dear ware, my lord ; yet bid you well as may be.
Strike hands ; a bargain : she shall be your own,
Or if she will not—

King. Nay, if she do refuse,
I'll send a death's man with you ; this is he.

* See the *The Downfall of Huntington*, note to p. 69.

If she be wilful, leave her to his hands,
And on her own head be her hasted end.

Monk. The matter shall be done.

King. Sirrah, what poisons have you ready ?

Brand. Store, store.

King. Wait on the monk, then, and ere we take horse,
I'll give you such instructions as you need.

Hubert, prepare to Windsor with our host.

[*Exeunt King, Monk, and Brand.*]

Hubert. Your tyrannies have lost my love almost,
And yet I cannot chuse but love eternally
This wanton king, replete with cruelty.
Oh ! how are all his princely virtues stain'd
With lust, abhorred, and lascivious heat,
Which kindling first to fire, now in a flame
Shews to the whole world clearly his foul shame.
To quench this flame full many a tide of tears,
Like overflowing-full seas, have been spent ;
And many a dry land drunk with human blood ;
Yet nothing helps his passions violent :
Rather, they add oil to his raging fire,
Heat to his heat, desire to his desire.
Somewhat, I fear, is now a managing,
For that prodigious bloody stigmatic*
Is never call'd unto his kingly sight,
But like a comet he portendeth still
Some innovation, or some monstrous act,
Cruel, unkindly, horrid, full of hate ;
As that vile deed at Windsor done of late.
Gentle Matilda, somewhat I mistrust ;

* This word is found in Henry the VI, part ii. act v. sc. 1, where young Clifford applies it to Richard. Malone observes in a note, that according to Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 1616, *stygmatick* originally and properly signified "a person who has been *branded* with a hot iron for some crime." The name of the man to whom Hubert here applies the word, is *Brand*.

Webster in his *Vittoria Corombona* (D. O. P. VI. 264) applies the term metaphorically.

"The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison
And let the *stigmatic* wrinkles in thy face,
Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide,
One still overtake another."

Yet thee I need not fear, such is his love.
Again, the place doth give thee warrantize ;
Yet I remember when his highness said,
The lustful monk of Bury should him aid.
I, so it is : if she have any ill,
Through the lewd shaveling will her shame be wrought.
If it so chance, Matilda's guiltless wrong
Will with the loss of many a life be bought.
But Hubert will be still his dread lord's friend,
However he deserves, his master serve ;
Though he neglect, him will I not neglect :
Whoever fails him, I will John affect ;
For though kings fault in many a foul offence,
Subjects must sue, not mend with violence. [Exit.

SCENE III.

Enter OXFORD, QUEEN.

Oxford. Now, by my faith, you are to blame, madam,
Ever tormenting, ever vexing you :
Cease of these fretting humours, pray ye do.
Grief will not mend it ; nought can pleasure you,
But patient suffering ; nor, by your grace's leave,
Have you such cause to make such hue and cry
After a husband ; you have not in good sooth.
Yearly a child ! this payment is not bad.
Content, fair queen, and do not think it strange,
That Kings do sometimes seek delight in change :
For now and then, I tell you, poor men range.
Sit down a little, I will make you smile.
Though I be now like to the snowy Alps,
I was as hot as *Ætna* in my youth ;
All fire, i'faith, true heart of oak, right steel,
A ruffian, lady. Often for my sport
I to a lodge of mine did make resort,
To view my deer, I said ; dear God can tell,
It was my keeper's wife whom I lov'd well.
My countess, (God be with her) was a shrow,
As women be, your majesty doth know ;
And some odd pick-thank put it in her head,
All was not well : but such a life I led,

And the poor keeper and his smooth-fac'd wife,
 That will I, nill I, there she might not bide.
 But for the people I did well provide ;
 And, by God's mother, for my lady's spite,
 I trick'd her in her kind, I serv'd her right.
 Were she at Londou, I the country kept ;
 Come thither, I at London would sojourn ;
 Came she to court, from court I straightway stept ;
 Return, I to the court would back return.
 So this way, that way, every way she went,
 I still was retrograde, seld* opposite :
 Till at the last, by mildness and submission,
 We met, kiss'd, join'd, and here left all suspicion.

Queen. Now out upon you, Vere: I would have
 thought,

The world had not contain'd a chaster man.

Oxford. Now, by my fay, I will be sworn I am.
 In all I tell you I confess no ill,
 But that I curb'd a froward woman's will :
 Yet had my keeper's wife been of my mind,
 There had been cause some fault with us to find ;
 But I protest, her noes and nays were such,
 That for my life she ever kept go much.

Queen. You would take nay, but our king John says no ;
 No nay, no answer will suffice his turn :
 He, for he cannot tempt true chastity,
 Fills all the land with hostile cruelty.
 Is it not shame, he that should punish sin,
 Defend the righteous, help the innocent,
 Carves with his sword the purpose of his will,
 Upon the guarders of the virtuous,
 And hunts admired spotless maidenhead
 With all the darts of desolation,
 Because she scorneth to be dissolute ?
 Me, that he leaves, I do not murmur at ;
 That he loves her doth no whit me perplex,

* The sense seems to require that we should read
 " I still was retrograde, *still* opposite ;"
 unless Oxford mean that he seldom met his wife face to face, but
 kept out of her way.

she did love him, or myself did hate :
t this alone is it that doth me vex ;
leaves me that loves him, and her pursues,
at loaths him and loves me. How can I chuse
t sadly grieve, and mourn in my green youth,
en nor of her, nor me he taketh ruth ?
Oxford. Ha' done, good Queen ; for God's good love,
ha' done :

is raging humor will no doubt be staid.
rtuous Matilda is profess'd a nun ;
ithin a mile, at Dunmow, lives the maid.
od will not suffer any thing so vile ;
e will not, sure, that he should her defile.

Queen. Nor church, nor chapel, abbey, nunnery,
e privileg'd from his intemperance.
it leave we him, and let us, I entreat,
o visit fair Matilda : much I am
debt unto the maid.

Oxford. You are indeed :
ou wrong'd her, when with blows you made her bleed.
ut if you please to visit her, fair dame,
ur coach is ready : we will soon be there.

Queen. Thanks Oxford : and with us I mean to bear,
he beauteous garland sent me out of Spain,
hich I will offer in the Abbey chapel,
s witness of Matilda's chastity ;
hom while I live, I ever vow to love,
recompence of rash and causeless wrong.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter BRAND solus ; with cup, bottle of poison.

Brand. Good, by this hand ! exceeding, passing,
good !

he dog no sooner drank it, but yugh ! yugh ! quoth he :
o grins me with his teeth, lies down and dies :
ugh ! quoth I : by God's blood, go thy ways.
f all thy line and generation,
Was never dog so worshipp'd as thou art,
'or ere thou died'st thou wert an officer.
lie not, by these nails : a squire's place ;

For the vile cur became a countess' taster :
 So died the dog. Now in our next account
 The countess comes ; let's see a Countess and a nun :
 Why so ; why so.

What, would she have the whole world quite undone ?
 We'll mete* her for that trick. What, not a king ?
 Hanging's too good for her. I am but a plain knave,
 And yet should any of these " no forsooths,"
 These pray-aways, these trip-and-goes, these tits,
 Deny me, now by these—

A plague upon this bottle and this cup,
 I cannot act mine oath ! but to 't again—
 By these ten ends of flesh and blood, I swear,
 First with this hand, wound thus about her hair,
 And with this dagger lustily lamback†—
 I would, i'faith, I, by my villainy,
 I would— But here, but here she comes,
 Led by two doctors in sweet lechery.

If they speed, with my poison I go by ;
 If not, have at you maid ; then step in I.

Enter MATILDA, between the MONK and the ABBESS.†

Monk. And as I said, fair maid, you have done well,
 In your distress, to seek this holy place.
 But tell me truly, how do you expel
 The rage of lust-arising heat in you ?

Matilda. By prayer, by fasting, by considering
 The shame of ill, and meed of doing well.

Abbess. But daughter, daughter, tell me in my ear,
 Have you no fleshly fightings now and then ? [*Whisper.*

Brand. Fleshly quoth you ? a maid of three score
 years,

* *Mete* here is used in the sense of *match*.

† *Lamback*] So the word stands in the original : the sense is clear, but *lamback* is not to be found in any glossary or dictionary. *Lambeak'd*, in the sense of *struck*, comes nearest to it, and would render the passage intelligible. Nobody has attempted to give the etymology of *to lambeake*, but perhaps it was a corruption of *limb-beat* ; or it may be from *lambo*, to lick, as a *licking* and a *beating* are synonymous. The Rev. A. Dyce, the judicious and accurate editor of *Peele's Works*, suggests "*I am back'd*" as the correct reading.

† The 4to. says, " between the Monk and the Nun."

And fleshly fightings sticking in her teeth?
Well, wench, thou'rt match'd, i'faith.

Abbess. You do confess the king hath tempted you,
And thinking now and then on gifts and state,
A glowing heat hath proudly puff'd you up:
But thanks to God, his grace hath done you good.

Monk. Who? the king's grace?

Matilda. No: God's grace, holy Monk.

Monk. The king's grace fain would do you good, fair
maid.

Matilda. Ill good: he means my fame to violate.

Abbess. Well, let that be.

Brand. Good bawd, good mother B.
How fain you would that that good deed should be!

Abbess. I was about to say somewhat upon a thing:
Oh thus it is.

We maids that all the day are occupied
In labour, and chaste hallow'd exercise,
Are nothing so much tempted while day lasts,
As we are tried and proved in the night.
Tell me, Matilda, had you since you came,
No dreams, no visions, nothing worth the note?

Matilda. No, I thank God.

Abbess. Truly you will, you will,
Except you take good heed and bless yourself;
For if I lie but on my back awhile
I am, past recovery, sure of a bad dream.
You see yon reverend Monk: now, God he knows,
I love him dearer for his holiness,
And I believe the devil knows it too;
For the foul fiend comes to me many a night,
As like the Monk, as if he were the man.
Many a hundred nights the Nuns have seen,
Pray, cry, make crosses, do they what they can.
Once gotten in, then do I fall to work,
My holy-water bucket being near hand,
I whisper secret spells, and conjure him,
That the foul fiend hath no more power to stand:
He down, as I can quickly get him laid,
I bless myself, and like a holy maid,

Turn on my right side, where I sleep all night
Without more dreams, or troubling of the sprite.

Brand. An Abbess? By the cross of my good blade,*
An excellent mother to bring up a maid!
For me I mean, and my good master, John;
But never any for an honest man. [Coughs.
Now, fie upon that word of honesty,
Passing my throat 't had almost choked me:
'Sblood, I'll forswear it for this trick.

Monk. We trifle time. Fair maid, it's thus in brief:
This Abbey by your means may have relief;
An hundred marks a year. Answer, I pray,
What will you do herein?

Matilda. Even all I may.

Abbess. It's charitably spoken, my fair child:
A little thing of your's, a little help,
Will serve the turn: learn but to bear, to bear
The burden of this world, and it will do.

Brand. Well, go thy ways: is this no bawd think
you?

Matilda. Madam, the heavy burden of the world
Hath long oppress'd me.

Abbess. But not 'press'd you right;
Now shall you bear a burden far more light.

Matilda. What burden-bearing? whereto tends this
talk?

Monk. To you, to us, this Abbey, and king John.

Matilda. Oh, God forefend he should be thought
upon!

Monk. Lady, make short: the king must lie with you.

Matilda. With me? with me?

[First turns to the Monk, then to the Abbess.

Abbess. Sweet, never look so strange:
He shall come closely,† nobody shall see.

* To swear by the cross of the sword was a very common practice, and many instances are to be found in D. O. P. but see particularly note 2, to the *Pinner of Wakefield*, vol. ii. and notes on *Hamlet*, A. I. Sc. 5.

† i. e. *secretly*—a very common application of the word in our old writers. Several examples are collected in a note to *King John* A. IV. Sc. 1.

Matilda. How can he come, but one hath eyes to see?

Monk. Your chamber windows shall be shadowed.

Matilda. But no veil from my conscience shadows me.

Abbess. And all the Nuns sent quietly to bed.

Matilda. But they will rise, and by my blushing red,
Quickly give guess of my lost maidenhead.

Brand. She goes, i'faith: by God, she is their own!

Monk. Be not so nice, the sin is venial,
Considering you yield for charity;
And by your fall, the nunnery shall rise.

Abbess. Regard good council, daughter: pray, be wise.

Monk. Come, here's a stir! will't do wench? will it do?

Abbess. Say I, say I; forget the sound of no,
Or else say no and take it: wilt thou so?

Matilda. Do you intend thus lewdly as you speak?

*Brand.** I, by Gog's blood, do they: and, moppet, you were best

To take their proffers, lest if they forsake you,
I play the devil's part, step in and take you.

Matilda. Some holy water! help me, blessed Nuns!
Two damned spirits, in religious weeds,
Attempt to tempt my spotless chastity;
And a third devil, gaping for my soul,
With horrid starings ghastly frighteth me.

Abbess. You may
Call while you will; but, maid, list what we say,
Or be assur'd this is your dying day.

Matilda. In his name that did suffer for my sin,
And by this blessed sign, I conjure you.

[*Draws a crucifix.*
Depart, foul fiends, and cease to trouble me.

Brand. Zounds, she thinks us devils! Hear you, conjuror.

* Here, according to what follows, Brand steps forward and addresses Matilda. Hitherto he has spoken *aside*.

Except you use that trick, to conjure down
The standing spirit of my lord the King,
That your good mother there, the Abbess, uses
To conjure down the spirit of the Monk,
Not all your crosses have the power to bless
Your body from a sharp and speedy death.

Matilda. Are ye not fiends, but mortal bodies, then?
[*Feels them all.*]

Brand. Maid, maid, catch lower, when you feel
young men.

'Sblood, I was never taken for the devil till now.

Matilda. Oh, where shall chastity have true defence,
When churchmen lay this siege to innocence?
Where shall a maid have certain sanctuary,
When Lady Lust rules all the nunnery?
Now fie upon ye both, false seeming saints,
Incarnate devils, devilish hypocrites!
A cowed Monk, an aged veiled Nun,
Become false Pandars, and with lustful speech
Essay the chaste ears of true maidenhead!
Now fie upon this age. Would I were dead!

Monk. Come, leave her, lady: she shall have her wish.

Abbess. Speed her, I pray thee: should the baggage live,
She'll slander all the chaste nuns in the land.

[*Ereunt Monk, Abbess.*]

Brand. Well, well, go; get you two unto your con-
juring:

Let me alone to lay her on God's ground.

Matilda. Why dost thou stay?

Brand. Why, maid, because I must:
I have a message to you from the king.

Matilda. And thou art welcome to his humble maid.
I thought thee to be grim and fierce at first,
But now thou hast a sweet aspect, mild looks.
Art thou not come to kill me from the king?

Brand. Yes.

Matilda. And thou art welcome; even the welcom'st
man,
That ever came unto a woeful maid.
Be brief good fellow: I have in the world

No goods to give, no will at all to make ;
 But God's will, and the king's, on me be done.

A little money, kept to give in alms,
 Have about me: deaths-man take it all ;
 Thou art the last poor alms-man I shall see.

Come, come, despatch ! what weapon will death wear,
 When he assails me ? Is it knife, or sword,
 A strangling cord, or sudden flaming fire ?

Brand. Neither, thou manly maid : look here, look
 here ;

A cup of poison. Wherefore dost thou smile ?

Matilda. Oh God ! in this the king is merciful :
 My dear lov'd Huntington by poison died.
 Good fellow, tell the king I thank his grace,
 And do forgive his causeless cruelty.
 I do forgive thee too ; but do advise
 Thou leave this bloody course, and seek to save
 Thy soul immortal, closed in thy breast :

[*He gives it her.*

Be brief, I pray you. Now, to king John's health
 A full carouse :* and, God, remember not
 The curse he gave himself at Robin's death,
 Wishing by poison he might end his life,
 If ever he solicited my love.

Farewell, good fellow. Now thy medicine works,
 And with the labour, I am forc'd to rest.

Brand. Zounds ! she cares not : she makes death a jest.

Matilda. The guiltless fear not death. Farewell,
 good friend ;

I pray thee, be no trouble in my end.

[*He stands staring and quaking.*

Enter OXFORD, QUEEN, ABBESS, Attendants.

Oxford And say you, Lady Abbess, that there came
 One from the king unto her ? what was he ?

Abbess. Yonder he stands : I know not what he is.

[*Still he stands staring.*

* See Mr. Gifford's note on the words *rouse* and *carouse* in his
 Massinger I. 239. It would perhaps be difficult and certainly need-
 less to add any thing to it.

Queen. Jesus have mercy! Oxford, come not nigh him.

Oxford. Not nigh him, Madam? yes; keep you away.

Abbess. Come in, good Qucen; I do not mean to stay.

[*Exit Abbess.*

Queen. Nor I to stir before I see the end.*

Oxford. Why star'st thou thus? speak fellow; answer me.

Who art thou?

Brand. A bloody villain, and a murderer!
A hundred have I slain with mine own hands.
'Twas I that starv'd the lady Bruce to death,
And her young son, at Windsor Castle late:
'Tis I have slain Matilda, blessed maid,
And now will hurry to damnation's mouth,
Forc'd by the gnawing worm of conscience. [*Runs in.*

Oxford. Hold him, for God's sake! stay the desperate wretch.

Matilda. Oh, some good pitying man compassionate
That wretched man, so woeful desperate:
Save him for God's sake! he hath set me free
From much world's woe, much wrong, much misery.

Queen. I hear thy tongue, true perfect charity!
Chaste maid, fair maid, look up and speak to me.

Matilda. Who's here? My gracious sovereign
Isabel!

I will take strength and kneel.

Queen. Matilda sit;
I'll kneel to thee. Forgive me, gentle girl,
My most ungentle wrongs.

Matilda. Fair beauteous queen,
I give God thanks I do not think on wrongs.

Oxford. How now, Fitzwater's child! How dost thou girl?

Matilda. Well, my good lord of Oxford; pretty well:
A little travel more, and I shall rest,

* "Nor I to stir before I see the end,"

belongs to the Queen, unquestionably, but the 4to. gives it to the Abbess who has already gone out.

For I am almost at my journey's end.
 Oh, that my head were raised a little up,
 My drowsy head, whose dim decaying lights,
 Assure me it is almost time to sleep. [*Raise her head.*
 I thank your highness; I have now some ease.
 Be witness, I beseech your majesty,
 That I forgive the king, with all my heart;
 With all the little of my living heart,
 That gives me leave to say I can forgive;
 And I beseech high heaven he long may live
 A happy king, a king belov'd and fear'd.
 Oxford, for God's sake, to my father write
 The latest commendations of his child;
 And say, Matilda kept his honor's charge,
 Dying a spotless maiden undefil'd.
 Bid him be glad, for I am gone to joy,
 I, that did turn his weal to bitter woe.
 The king and he will quickly now grow friends,
 And by their friendship much content will grow.
 Sink earth to earth, fade flower ordain'd to fade,
 But pass forth soul unto the shrine of peace;
 Beg there atonement may be quickly made.
 Fair queen, kind Oxford, all good you attend.
 Fly forth, my soul, heaven's king be there thy friend.

[*Dies.*

Oxford. Oh pity, mourning sight! * age pitiless!
 Are these the messages king John doth send?
 Keep in my tears, for shame! your conduits keep,
 Sad woe-beholding eyes: no, will ye not?
 Why, then a God's name, weep. [*Sit.*

Queen. I cannot weep for wrath. Here, here! take in
 The blessed body of this noble maid:

* The reading of the old copy is,

"Oh *pity*, mourning sight! age pitiless!"

and as it is just intelligible it is retained, but the sense would be improved if we read,

"Oh *pity-moving* sight! age pitiless."

Pity-moving is a common epithet, and we find it afterwards in this play used by young Bruce,

"My tears, my prayers, my *pity-moving* moans."

In milk white clothing let the same be laid,
 Upon an open bier, that all may see
 King John's untimely lust and cruelty.

[*Exeunt with the body.*]

Oxford. I, be it so ; yourself, if so you please,
 Will I attend upon, and both us wait
 On chaste Matilda's body, which with speed
 To Windsor Castle we will hence convey.
 There is another spectacle of ruth,
 Old Bruce's famish'd lady and her son.

Queen. There is the king besieging of young Bruce:
 His lords are there ; who when they see this sight,
 I know, will have small heart for John to fight.

Oxford. But where's the murderer, ha ? is not he
 staid ?

*Servant.** Borne with a violent rage, he climb'd a
 tree,

And none of us could hinder his intent ;
 But getting to the top boughs, fast he tied
 His garters to his neck and a weak branch ;
 Which being unable to sustain his weight,
 Down to the ground he fell, where bones and flesh
 Lie pash'd† together in a pool of blood.

Oxford. Alas for woe ! but this is just heaven's doom
 On those that live by blood ; in blood they die.
 Make ‡ an example of it, honest friends,
 Do well, take pains, beware of cruelty.
 Come, madam, come : to Windsor let us go,
 And there to Bruce's grief, add greater woe. [*Exeunt.*]

* This servant entered probably just before Oxford's question ; but his entrance is not marked.

† To *pash*, signifies to crush or dash to pieces. So in the *Virgin Martyr*, A. ii. sc. 2.

With Jove's artillery, shot down at once,
 To *pash* your gods in pieces.

See Mr. Gifford's note upon this passage, and Reed's note on the same word in *Troilus and Cressida*, A. ii. sc. 3.

‡ The 4to. has it,

" May an example of it honest friends : "

but *make* is certainly the true reading.

SCENE II.

Enter BRUCE upon the walls.

Bruce. Will not my bitter bannings* and sad plaints,
My just and execrable execrations,
My tears, my prayers, my pity-moving moans
Prevail, thou glorious bright lamp of the day,
To cause thee keep an obit for their souls,
And dwell one month with the Antipodes?
Bright sun, retire; gild not this vault of death,
With thy illustrate rays: retire, retire,
And yield black night thy empery awhile:
A little while, till as my tears be spent,
My blood be likewise shed in raining drops,
By the tempestuous rage of tyrant John.
Learn of thy love, the morning: she hath wept,
Shower upon shower, of silver-dewy tears;
High trees, low plants, and pretty little flowers
Witness her woe: on them her grief appears,
And as she drips on them, they do not let
By drop and drop their mother earth to wet.
See these hard stones, how fast small rivulets
Issue from them, though they seem issueless,
And wet-eyed woe on every thing is view'd,
Save in thy face, that smil'st at my distress.
Oh, do not drink these tears thus greedily,
Yet let the morning's mourning garment dwell
Upon the sad earth. Wilt thou not, thou churl?
Then surfeit with thy exhalations speedily;
For all earth's venomous infecting worms
Have belch'd their several poisons on the fields,
Mixing their simples in thy compound draught.
Well, Phœbus, well, drink on, I say, drink on;
But when thou dost ungorge thee, grant me this,
Thou pour thy poisons on the head of John.

* *Bannings* are *cursings*. Hundreds of examples might be added to those collected by Steevens in a note to *King Lear*, A. ii. sc. 3. It is a singular coincidence that *ban*, signifying a *curse*, and *ban*, a public notice of *marriage*, should have the same origin.

*Drum. Enter CHESTER, MOWBRAY, SOLDIERS, at one door :** LEICESTER, RICHMOND, *at another : soldiers.*

Bruce. How now, my lords! were ye last night so pleas'd
With the beholding of that property,
Which John and other murderers have wrought
Upon my starved mother and her son,
That you are come again? Shall I again
Set open shop, shew my dead ware, dear bought
Of a relentless merchant, that doth trade
On the red sea, swoln mighty with the blood
Of noble, virtuous, harmless innocents?
Whose coal-black vessel is of ebony,
Their shrouds and tackle (wrought and wov'n by wrong)
Stretch'd with no other gale of wind, but grief,
Whose sighs with full blasts beateth on her shrouds;
The master murder is, the pilot shame,
The mariners, rape, theft, and perjury;
The burden, tyrannous oppression,
Which hourly he in England doth unlade.
Say, shall I open shop, and show my wares?

Leicester. No, good lord Bruce, we have enough of that.

Drum : Enter KING, HUBERT, SOLDIERS.

King. To Windsor welcome, Hubert. Soft; methinks
Bruce and our lords are at a parley now?

Bruce. Chester and Mowbray, you are John's sworn
friends;

Will you see more? speak; answer me my lords.
I am no niggard, you shall have your fill.

Both. We have too much, and surfeit with the woe.

Bruce. Are you all full? there comes a ravening kite,
That both at quick, at dead, at all will smite.
He shall, he must; I, and by 'r lady, may
Command me to give over holiday,
And set wide open what you would not see.

King. Why stand ye, lords, and see this traitor perch'd
Upon our castle's battlements so proud?
Come down young Bruce, set ope the castle gates:

* The words "at one door," are necessary to make the stage
direction intelligible, but they are not found in the original.

Unto thy sov'reign let thy knee be bow'd,
And mercy shall be given to thee and thine.

Bruce. Oh, miserable thing!
Comes mercy from the mouth of John, our king?
Why then, belike, hell will be pitiful.
I will not ope the gates, the gate I will;
The gate where thy shame, and my sorrow sits.
See my dead mother and her famish'd son!
Open thy tyrant's eyes, for to the world
I will lay open thy fell cruelties.

King. We heard, indeed, thy mother and her son
In prison died, by wilful famishment.

Bruce. Sin doubled upon sin! Slander'st thou the
dead?

Unwilling willingness it shall appear,
By then I have produc'd, as I will do,
The just presumptions 'gainst your unjust act.

King. Assail the castle, lords! alarum, drums!
And drown this screech-owl's cries with your deep
sounds.

Leicester. I tell thee, drummer, if thy drum thou smite,
By heav'n, I'll send thy soul to hell's dark night.
Hence with thy drum! God's passion, get thee hence!
Begone, I say; move not my patience. [*Exit drum.*]

King. Are you advised, Leicester, what you do?

Leicester. I am advised; for, my sovereign, know,
There's not a lord here will lift up his arm
Against the person of yon noble youth,
Till you have heard the circumstantial truth,
By good presumptions, touching this foul deed.
Therefore, go on, young Bruce; proceed, refel*
The allegation that puts in this doubt,
Whether thy mother, through her wilfulness,
Famish'd herself and her sweet son, or no.

Bruce. Unlikely supposition: nature first denies,
That any mother, when her youngling cries,
If she have means, is so unnatural
To let it faint and starve. But we will prove

* This line is quoted by Steevens in a note to *Measure for Measure*,
A. v. sc. 1. to prove that the meaning of *refel* is *refute*.

52 THE DEATH OF ROBERT. [ACT I.
She had no means, except this moanful mean,
This torture of herself. Come forth, come forth,
Sir William Blunt, whom slander says I slew :
Come, tell the king and lords what you know true.

*Enter SIR WILLIAM BLUNT.**

King. Thou hast betray'd our castle.

Blunt. No : God can tell,
It was surpris'd by politic report,
And affirmation that your grace was slain.

Richmond. Go on, Sir William Blunt :
Pass briefly to the lady's famishment,

Blunt. About some ten days since there came one
Brand,

Bringing a signet from my lord the king,
And this commission, signed with his hand,
[*Lords, look and read the thing.*

Commanding me (as the contents express)
That I should presently deliver up
The lady Bruce and her young son to him.

Mowbray. What time o'day was this ?

Blunt. It was, lord Mowbray, somewhat past eleven,
For we were even then sitting down to dine.

Leicester. But did ye dine ?

Blunt. The lady and her son did not.
Brand would not stay.

Bruce. No, Leicester, no ; for here is no such sign
Of any meat's digestion.

Richmond. But by the way, tell us I pray you, Blunt,
While she remain'd with you, was she distraught
With grief, or any other passions violent ?

Blunt. She now and then would weep, and often
pray

For reconciliation 'twixt the king and lords.

Chester. How to her son did she affected stand ?

Blunt. Affection could not any more affect ;
Nor might a mother shew more mother's love.

Mowbray. How to my lord the king ?

* In what way precisely Sir William Blunt "comes forth" does not appear, nor is his entrance marked in the old copy.

Blunt. Oh, my Lord God!
 I never knew a subject love king more.
 She never would blin* telling how his grace
 Sav'd her young son from soldiers and from fire;
 How fair he spake, gave her her son to keep:
 And then, poor lady, she would kiss her boy,
 Pray for the king so hearty earnestly,
 That in pure zeal she wept most bitterly.

King. I weep for her, and do by heaven protest,
 I honor'd Bruce's wife, howe'er that slave
 Rudely effected what I rashly will'd.
 Yet when he came again, and I bethought
 What bitter penance I had put them to
 For my conceiv'd displeasure 'gainst old Bruce,
 I bade the villain post and bear them meat:
 Which he excus'd, protesting pity mov'd him
 To leave wine, bread, and other powder'd meat,†
 More than they twain could in a fortnight eat.

Blunt. Indeed, this can I witness with the king,
 Which argues in that point his innocence:
 Brand did bear in a month's provision,
 But lock'd it, like a villain, far from them;
 And lock'd them in a place where no man's ear
 Might hear their lamentable woeful moans;
 For all the issue, both of vent and light,
 Came from a loover‡ at the tower's top,
 Till now lord Bruce made open this wide gap.

Bruce. Had I not reason, think you, to make wide
 The window, that should let so much woe forth?
 Where sits my mother, martyr'd by herself,
 Hoping to save her child from martyrdom;

* To *blin* is to *tire*, and in this sense it is met with in Spenser, and other poets: Mr. Todd informs us that it is still in use in the north of England. Ben Jonson in his *Sad Shepherd*, converts the verb into a substantive, "withouten *blin*."

† Powder'd is the old word for salted: it is in this sense Shakespeare makes Falstaff use it, when he says: "if you embowel me to day, I'll give you leave to *powder* me and eat me to-morrow."

‡ i. e. *l'ouvert* or opening:

Nor lighted was with window nor with *loover*
 But with continual candle light. Spenser, F. Q. b. 6.

Where stands my brother, martyr'd by himself,
Because he would not taste his mother's blood?
For thus I gather this:—my mother's teeth and chin
Are bloody with the savage cookery,
Which her soft heart, through pity of her son
Respectless, made her practise on herself;
And her right hand, with offering it the child,
Is with her own pure blood stain'd and defil'd.
My little brother's lips and chin alone
Are tainted with the blood; but his even teeth,
Like orient pearl, or snow-white ivory,
Have not one touch of blood, one little spot:
Which is an argument, the boy would not
Once stir his lips to taste that bloody food
Our cruel-gentle mother minister'd;
But as it seem'd (for see his pretty palm
Is bloody too) he cast it on the ground,
For on this side the blessed relics lie,
By famine's rage divided from this shrine.
Sad woeful mother in Jerusalem,
Who, when thy son and thou didst faint for food,
Buried his sweet flesh in thy hungry womb,
How merciless wert thou, if we compare
Thy fact and this! For my poor lady mother
Did kill herself to save my dying brother;
And thou, ungentle son of Miriam,
Why didst thou beg life when thy mother lack'd?
My little brother George did nobly act
A more courageous part: he would not eat,
Nor beg to live. It seem'd he did not cry:
Few tears stand on his cheek, smooth is each eye;
But when he saw my mother bent to die,
He died with her. Oh, childish valiancy!

King. Good Bruce, have done. My heart cannot contain

The grief it holds; my eyes must shower down rain.

Leicester. Which showers are even as good,
As rain in harvest, or a swelling flood
When neighbouring meadows lack the mowers scythe.

A march for burial, with drum and fife. Enter Salisbury: Matilda borne with nuns, one carrying a white pendant—these words writ in gold; Amoris Castitatis et Honoris Honos. The Queen following the bier, carrying a garland of flowers. Set in the midst of the stage.

Richmond. List Leicester: hear'st thou not a mournful march?

Leicester. Yes Richmond, and it seemeth old De Vere.

Oxford. Lords, by your leave, is not our sovereign here?

King. Yes, good old Aubrey.

Oxford. Ah, my gracious lord,
That you so much your high state should neglect!
Ah, God in heaven forgive this bloody deed.
Young Bruce, young Bruce, I weep
Thy mother and thy brother's wrong;
Yet to afflict thee more, more grief I bring.

Bruce. Oh, honorable Aubrey de Vere,
Let sorrow in a sable suit appear:
Do not misshape her garment, like delight;
If it be grief, why cloth'st thou her in white?

Oxford. I cannot tell thee yet: I must sit down.
Attend, young Bruce, and listen to the queen;
She'll not be tongue tied: we shall have a stir
Anon, I fear, would make a man half sick.

Queen. Are you here lecher? Oh, intemperate king!
Wilt thou not see me? Come, come, shew your face,
Your grace's graceless, king's unkingly face.
What mute? hands folded, eyes fix'd on the earth?
Whose turn is next now to be murdered?
The famish'd Bruces are on yonder side,
On this another I will name anon;
One for whose head this garland I do bear,
And this fair milk-white spotless pendant too.
Look up, king John! see, yonder sits thy shame;
Yonder it lies: what, must I tell her name?
It is Matilda, poisoned by thee.

King. Matilda! oh, that foul swift-footed slave
That kills ere one have time to bid him save!
Fair gentle girl, ungently made away.

Bruce. My banish'd uncle's daughter art thou there?
Then I defy all hope, and swear—

Leicester. Stay, Bruce, and listen well what oath to
swear.

Lewis the Dolphin, pitying our estate,
Is by the christian king, his father, sent
With aid to help us, and is landed too.
Lords, that will fly the den of cruelty,
And fight to free yourselves from tyranny *—
Bruce, keep that castle to the only use
Of our elected king, Lewis of France.

Oxford. God's passion! do not so: king John is here!
Lords, whisper not with Leicester: Leicester fie!
Stir not again regardless mutiny.
Speak to them, Hugh:† I know thou lov'st the king.
Madam, go to them; nay do, for God's sake do!
Down with your stomach, for if he go down,
You must down too, and be no longer queen:
Advise you; go, entreat them speedily.
My sovereign, wherefore sit you sighing there?
The lords are all about to follow Lewis:
Up and entreat them, else they will away.

King. Good Oxford, let them go. Why should they
stay?

Oxford. What, are ye desperate? That must not be.
Hear me my lords.

[All stand in council.]

King. This pendant let me see.
Amoris castitatis, et honoris honos.
She was, indeed, of love the honor once,‡

* The sense is incomplete here: perhaps a line has been lost, or Leicester suddenly recollects that Bruce has possession of Windsor Castle, and warns him not to relinquish it.

† An abridgment of *Hubert* apparently for the sake of the metre.

‡ In this line there is, in the old copy, a curious and obvious misprint: it stands in the 4to.—

“She was indeed of *London* the honour once.”

When she was lov'd of virtuous Huntington :
 Of chastity the honor all her life ;
 To impure thoughts she never could be won :
 And she of honor was the honor too :
 By birth, in life, she honor honored.

Bring in two tapers lighted : quick, despatch !

Leicester. Remember, Bruce, thy charge. Come,
 lords, away !

All but Oxford and Hubert. Away ! we will away.

[*Bring in two white tapers.*

Oxford. Hark, Leicester, but one word : a little stay.
 Help me, good Hubert ! help me, gentle queen !

[*Again confer.**

King. How dim these tapers burn ! they give no light.
 Here were two beauteous lamps, that could have taught
 The sun to shine by day, the moon by night ;
 But they are dim, too, clean extinguished.
 Away with these, sith those fair lights be dead !

Oxford. And, as I say, hark, Bruce, unto our talk.
 Think you it is for love of England Lewis comes ?
 Nay, France is not so kind ; I would it were.
 Advise yourselves. Hark, dost thou hear me, Bruce ?

Bruce. Oxford, I do.

Oxford. Can noble English hearts bear the French
 yoke ?

No, Leicester : Richmond, think on Lewis' sire,
 That left you, and your king in Palestine.

Queen. And think, beside, you know not Lewis' nature,
 Who may be as bad as John, or, rather worse
 Than he.

Hubert. And look, my lords, upon his silent woe ;
 His soul is at the door of death I know.
 See, how he seeks to suck, if he could draw
 Poison from dead Matilda's ashy lips.

Instead of—

“She was indeed of *love* the honor once.”

The king is translating and commenting on the motto on the pendant, as is quite evident from the manner in which he proceeds. Besides, the measure requires a word of one syllable.

* The lords again “stand in council” as before, while the king fills up the interval to the audience.

I will be sworn his very heart-string nips.
A vengeance on that slave, that cursed Brand !
I'll kill him, if I live, with this right hand.

Oxford. Thou canst not, Hubert; he hath kill
himself.

But to our matter. Leicester, pray thee speak.
Young Bruce, for God's sake, let us know thy mind.

Bruce. I would be loth to be a stranger's slave :
For England's love, I would no French king have.

Leicester. Well Oxford, if I be deceived in Jo
again,

It's long of you, lord Hubert, and the queen.

Yield up the castle, Bruce : we'll once more try
King John's proceedings. Oxford, tell him so.

*[Oxford goes to the king, does his duty, and
talks with him.]*

Bruce. I will come down. But first farewell, do
mother, *[Kiss h*

Farewell, poor little George, my pretty brother !

Now will I shut my shambles in again :

Farewell, farewell !

In everlasting bliss your sweet souls dwell.

Oxford. But you must mend, i'faith ; in faith y
must.*

Leicester. My lord, once more your subjects do subn
Beseeching you to think how things have past ;
And let some comfort shine on us, your friends,
Through the bright splendor of your virtuous life.

King. I thank you all ; and, Leicester, I protest,
I will be better than I yet have been.

Bruce. Of Windsor castle here the keys I yield.

King. Thanks Bruce : forgive me, and I pray thee
Thy mother and thy brother buried,

[Bruce offers to kiss Matil

In Windsor castle church. Do, kiss her cheek :

Weep thou on that, on this side I will weep.

Queen. Chaste virgin, thus I crown thee with th
flowers.

* This is probably addressed to the king, with whom Oxford
been talking.

King. Let us go on to Dunmow with this maid :
Among the hallow'd nuns let her be laid.
Unto her tomb a monthly pilgrimage
Doth king John vow, in penance for this wrong.
Go forward, maids ; on with Matilda's hearse,
And on her tomb see you engrave this verse.

Within this marble monument doth lie
Matilda, martyr'd for her chastity. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUS.

Thus is Matilda's story shown in act,
And rough hewn out by an uncunning hand :
Being of the most material points compact,
That with the certain'st state of truth do stand.

EDITION.

The Death of Robert, Earle of Huntington. Otherwise called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde : with the lamentable Tragedie of chaste Matilda, his faire maid Marian, poysoned at Dunmowe by King John. Acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Nottingham, Lord high Admirall of England, his servants. Imprinted at London, for William Leake, 1601, 4to. B. L.

THE
Misfortunes of Arthur.

BY
THOMAS HUGHES.

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THE
Misfortunes of Arthur.

BY
THOMAS HUGHES.

WITH
ILLUSTRATIONS AND NOTES
BY
J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ.

LONDON:
SEPTIMUS PROWETT,
PALL MALL.

1828.

THE
SFORTUNES OF ARTHUR.

It appears that eight persons, Members of the Society of Gray's Inn, were engaged in the production of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* for the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth, at Greenwich, on the 8th Feb. 1587: viz. Thomas Hughes, the author of the whole body of the tragedy; William Fulbecke who wrote two speeches substituted on the representation and appended to the old printed copy; Nicholas Trotte who furnished the Introduction; Francis Flower who penned Choruses for the first and second acts; Christopher Yelverton, Francis Bacon and John Lancaster who devised the dumb shews, then usually accompanying such performances; and a person of the name of Penroodocke, who, assisted by Flower and Lancaster, "directed the proceedings at Court."

Regarding Hughes and Trotte no information has survived. Fulbecke was born in 1566, became, as we are told, an eminent writer on the law, and in the year when this tragedy was brought-out, published a work called "Christian Ethics." The "Maister Francis Bacon," poken of at the conclusion of the piece, was of course no other than Lord Bacon; and it is a new feature in his biography, though not perhaps very prominent nor important, that he was so nearly concerned in the preparation of a play at Court: in Feb. 1587, he had just commenced his 28th year. Christopher Yelverton, as early as 1566, had written the epilogue to Gascoyne's *Jocasta*, and on the present occasion was probably resorted to for his experience in such undertakings. Regarding Flower, Lancaster, and Penroodocke we have nothing to communicate.

The Misfortunes of Arthur is a dramatic composition only known to exist in the Garrick Collection. Judging from internal evidence, it seems to have been printed with unusual care under the superintendence of the principal Author: in the course of it some lines and words were cancelled, and those which were substituted were

pasted over the objectionable passages. In the notes we have given both versions, and the whole is reprinted as nearly as possible in its original shape. The mere rarity of this unique drama would not have recommended it to our notice; but it is not likely that such a man as Lord Bacon would have lent his aid to the production of a piece which was not intrinsically good, and unless we much mistake, there is a richer and a nobler vein of poetry running through it, than is to be found in any previous work of the kind. The blank verse is generally free and flowing, although now and then deformed by alliteration, and rendered somewhat monotonous by the want of that variety of rhythm, which Marlowe may be said to have introduced, and which Shakespeare scarcely exceeded.

Most of the characters, and particularly those of Arthur and Mordred, are drawn with distinctness and vigour: the fiery and reckless ambition of the son is excellently contrasted with the cool determination and natural affection of the father. As an illustration of the former we may refer to many passages, but especially to several in the third scene of the second act; while the character and disposition of the latter are depicted in a masterly manner both before and after the final battle: this catastrophe, as far as relates to the death of Mordred, is mentioned by Dante in Canto xxxii. of his *Inferno*:

Non quelli a cui fu rotto il petto e l'ombra
Con esso un colpo per la man d'Artu.

The substance of the story is to be found in the *Morte Arthur*. The action is one, but the unities of time and place are disregarded; and although the tragedy in many respects is conducted upon the plan of the ancients, there are in it evident approaches to the irregularity of our romantic drama. It forms a sort of connecting link between such pieces of unimpassioned formality as *Ferrux and Porrex*, and rule-rejecting historical plays, as Shakespeare found them and left them.

THE INTRODUCTION.

AN Introduction penned by Nicholas Trotte, Gentleman, one of the Society of Grayes-Inne; which was pronounced in manner following: viz. Three Muses came on the stage apparelled accordingly, bringing five Gentlemen Students with them attyred in their usuall garments, whom one of the Muses presented to her Majestie as Captives: the cause whereof she delivered by speach as followeth.

OF conquest (gracious Queene) the signs and fruits,
Atchiv'd 'gainst such as wrongfully withheld
The service by choice wits to Muses due,
In humblest wise these Captives we present.
And least your highnes might suspect the gift,
As spoile of warre that justice might impeach,
Heare and discern how just our quarrell was,
Avowed* (as you see) by good successe.
A dame there is, whom men Astrea terme,
Shee that pronounceth oracles of lawes,
Who to prepare fit servants for her traine,
As by commission, takes up flowring wits,
Whom first she schooleth to forget and scorne
The noble skills of language and of arts,
The wisdoms which discourse of stories teach,
The ornaments which various knowledge yeelds:
But Poesie she hath in most disdain
And marshals its next Follye's scorned place.
Then, when she hath these worthy prints defac'd
Out of the mindes that can endure her hand,
What doth she then supplie in steede of these?
Forsooth, some olde reports of altered lawes,
Clamors of Courts, and cavils upon words,
Grounds without ground, supported by conceit,

* *Avowed*] i. e. *avouched*, from the Fr. *avouer*.

And reasons of more subtiltie then sense.
 What shall I say of moote points strange, and doubts
 Still argued, but never yet agreed?
 And shee that doth deride the poets lawe,
 Because he must his words in order place,
 Forgets her formes of pleading, more precise,
 More bound to words then is the poets lore:
 And for these fine conceits she fitly chose
 A tongue that barbarisme it selfe doth use.
 We, noting all these wrongs, did long expect
 There hard condition would have made them wise,
 To offer us their service, plac'd so ill;
 But finding them addicted to their choyce,
 And specially desirous to present
 Your Majestie with fruits of proviuce new,
 Now did resolve to double force and skill,
 And found and usde the vantage of the time,
 Surprisde their fort and tooke them captives all.
 So now submissee, as to their state belongs,
 They gladly yeelde their homage long withdrawne,
 And Poetry which they did most contemne,
 They glory now her favours for to weare.
 My sisters laught to see them take the penne;
 And lose their wits all in unwoonted walkes:
 But to your highnes that delight we leave
 To see these poets new their stile advaunce.
 Such as they are, or naught or litle worth,
 Deigne to accept, and therewith we beseech,
 That novelty give price to worthlesse things.

Unto this speach one of the Gentlemen answered as followeth:

Good Ladies, unacquaint with cunning reach,
 And easly led to glory in your powre,
 Heare now abasht our late dissembled mindes.
 Not now the first time, as your selves best knowe,
 Ye Muses sought our service to commaund:
 Oft have ye wandred from Pernassus hill,
 And shewed your selves with sweet and tempting grace,

But yet returnd, your traine increasde with fewe.
 This resolution doth continue still :
 Unto Astrea's name we honour beare,
 Whose sound perfections we doe more admire
 Then all the vanted store of Muses guifts,
 Let this be one (which last you put in ure
 In well depraving that deserveth praise)
 No eloquence, disguising reason's shape,
 Nor Poetrie, each vaine affection's nurse,
 No various historie, that doth leade the minde
 Abroad to auntient tales from instant use,
 Nor these, nor other moe, too long to note,
 Can winne Astrea's servants to remove
 Their service once devote to better things.
 They, with attentive mindes and serious wits,
 Revolve records of deepe judiciaall acts ;
 They waigh, with steaddy and indifferent hand,
 Each word of lawe, each circumstance of right ;
 They hold the grounds which time and use hath
 sooth'd,*

Though shallow sense conceive them as conceits,
 Presumptuous sense, whose ignorance dare judge
 Of things remov'd by reason from her reach.
 One doubt, in mootes by argument encreas'd,
 Cleares many doubts experience doth object.
 The language she first chose, and still retaines,
 Exhibites naked truth in aptest termes.
 Our industrie maintaineth unimpeacht
 Prerogative of Prince, respect to Peeres,
 The Commons libertie and each mans right ;
 Suppresseth mutin force and practicke fraude,
 Things that for worth our studious care deserve :
 Yet never did we banish nor reject
 Those ornaments of knowledge nor of touns :
 That slander envious ignorance did raise.
 With Muses still we entercourse allowe,
 T'enrich our state with all their forreine freight ;
 But never homage nor acknowledgement,

* *sooth'd*] i. e. shewn to be *true*: the author has converted the substantive, *sooth*, into a verb.

Such as of subjects allegiance doth require.
 Now heere the cause of your late conquest wonne.
 We had discovered your intent to be
 (And, sure, ye ladies are not secrete all ;
 Speach and not silence is the Muse's grace)
 We well perceiv'd (I say) your minde to be
 T'employ such prisoners, as themselves did yeeld,
 To serve a Queene, for whom her purest gold
 Nature refin'd, that she might therein sette
 Both private and imperiall vertues all.
 Thus (Soveraigne Lady of our lawes and us)
 Zeale may transforme us into any shape.
 We, which with trembling hand the penne did guide,
 Never well pleasde, all for desire to please ;
 For still your rare perfections did occurre,
 Which are admir'd of Muses and of men.
 Oh ! with howe steddie hand, and heart assur'd,
 Should we take up the warlike lance or sword,
 With mind resolv'd to spend our loyall blood
 Your least commaund with speede to execute !
 O ! that before our time the fleeting shippe
 Ne'r wandred had in watery wildernes,
 That we might first that venture undertake,
 In strange attempt t'approve our loyall hearts !
 Be it souldiers, seamen, poets, or what els.
 In service once enjoynd, to ready mindes
 Our want of use should our devoyer encrease.
 Now since in steade of art we bring but zeale,
 In steade of prayse we humbly pardon crave.
 The matter which we purpose to present,
 Since streights of time our liberty controwles,
 In tragike notes the plagues of vice recounts.
 How sutes a tragedie for such a time ?
 Thus—for that since your sacred Majestie
 In gracious hands the regall scepter held,
 All tragedies are fled from state to stadge.

NICHOLAS TROTTE.

The misfortunes of Arthur (Uther Pendragons Sonne) reduced into tragickall notes by *Thomas Hughes* one of the societie of Grayes-Inne. And here set downe as it past from under his handes, and as it was presented, excepting certaine wordes and lines, where some of the Actors either helped their memories by brief omission, or fitted their acting by some alteration. With a note in the ende of such speeches as were penned by others, in lue of some of these hereafter following.

The Argument of the Tragedie.

At a banquet made by Uther Pendragon for the solemnising of his conquest against the Saxons, he fell enamoured of Igera, wife to Gorlois Duke of Cornwell: who perceiving the king's passion, departed with his wife and prepared warres at Cornwell; where also, in a strong holde beyond him, hee placed her. Then the king envied an armye to suppress him, but waxing impatient of his desire to Igera, transformed himselfe, by Merlin his cunning, into the likenesse of Gorlois, and after his acceptance with Igera he returned to his siedge, where he slew Gorlois. Igera was delivered of Arthur and Anne, twins of the same birth. Uther Pendragon 15 years after, pursuing the Saxons, was by them poysoned. Arthur delighted in his sister Anne, who made him father of Mordred. Seventene yeres after, Lucius Tiberius of Rome demanded a tribute, due by conquest of Cæsar. Arthur gathered his powers of 13 kinges besides his owne, and leaving his queene Guenevora in the tuition of Mordred, to whome likewise he committed the kingdome in his absence, arrived at Fraunce, where, after 9 yeares warres, he sent the slaine bodie of Tiberius unto Rome for the tribute. During this absence Mordred grew ambitious, for th'affecting whereof he made love to Guenevora, who gave eare unto him. Then by th' assistance of Gilla, a British Lord, hee usurped,

and for maintenance entertayned with large promises the Saxons, Irish, Pictes, and Normands. Guenevora hearing that Arthur was alreadie embarked for returne, through despaire purposing diversley, sometimes to kill her husband, sometimes to kill her selfe, at last resolved to enter into religion. Arthur at his landing was resisted on the stronds of Dover, where he put Mordred to flight. The last fielde was fought at Cornwell, where after the death of one hundred and tweentie thousand, saving on either side 20, Mordred received his death, and Arthur his deadly wound.

The argument and manner of the first dumbe shewe.

Sounding the musicke, there rose three furies from under the stage, apparelled accordingly with snakes and flames about their blacke haire and garments. The first with a snake in the right hande, and a cup of wine, with a snake athwart the cup, in the left hand. The second with a firebrand in the right hande, and a Cupid in the left. The thirde with a whippe in the right hand and a Pægasus in the left. Whiles they went masking about the stage, there came from another place three nuns, which walked by themselves. Then after a full sight given to the beholders, they all parted, the furies to Mordred's house, the nuns to the cloister. By the first fury with the snake and cup was signified the banquet of Uther Pendragon, and afterward his death, which insued by the poysoned cup. The second furie with her firebrande and Cupid, represented Uther's unlawfull heate and love conceyved at the banquet, which never ceased in his posteritie. By the third, with her whip and Pægasus, was prefigured the crueltie and ambition which thence insued and continued to th' affecting of this tragedie. By the nuns was signified the remorse and dispaire of Guenevora, that wanting other hope tooke a nunrie for her refuge. After their departure the fowre which represented the Chorus tooke their places.

The Argument of the first Act.

the first scene the spirit of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, the man first and most wronged in this historie, being dispoild both of wife, dukedom, and life, seeketh revenge for these injuries, denouncing the whole misfortune insuing.

the second scene Guenevora, hearing that Arthur is on the seas returning desperately, manaceth his death, from which intent she is dissuaded by Fronia, lady of her court, and privie to her secretes.

the third scene Guenevora perplexedly mindeth her owne death, whence being diswaded by her father, she resolveth to enter into religion.

the fourth scene Mordred goeth about to perswade Guenevora to persist in her love, but misseth thereof; he then is exhorted by Conan (a noble man of Britain) to reconcile himselfe to his Father at his comming, he refuseth so to doe, and resolveth to keepe him from landing by battaile.

THE NAMES OF THE SPEAKERS.

GORLOIS, *Duke of Cornwall's Ghost.*

GUENEVORA, *the Queene.*

FRONIA, *a Lady of her trayne.*

ANGHARAD, *Sister to the Queene.*

MORDRED, *the Usurper.*

CONAN, *a faithful Counsellor.*

Nuntius of Arthurs landing.

The Heralt from Arthur.

GAWIN, *King of Albainie.*

GILLA, *a Brytishe Earle.*

GILLAMOR, *King of Ireland.*

CHELDRIK, *Duke of Saxonie.*

The Lorde of the Pictes.

ARTHUR, *King of great Brytain.*

CADOR, *Duke of Cornwall*

HOEL, *King of little Brittainie.*

The Heralt from Mordred.

ASCHILLUS, *King of Denmarke.*

The King of Norwaye.

A number of Souldiers.

Nuntius of the last battell.

GILDAS, *a noble man of Brytain.*

CHORUS.

THE FIRST ACT AND FIRST SCENE.

GORLOIS.*

SINCE thus through channells blacke of Limbo lake,
And deepe infernall floude of Stygian poole,
The gastly Caron's boat transported backe
Thy ghost from Pluto's pittes and glowming shade
To former light, once lost by destnies doome,
Where proude Pendragon, broylde with shamefull lust,
Dispoylde thee erst of wife, of lande and life,
Nowe, Gorlois, worke thy wish, cast here thy gaule,
Glutte on revenge! thy wrath abhorrs delayes.

What though (besides Pendragons poysoned end)
The vile reproach he wrought thee by thy phere,†
Through deepe increase of crymes alike is plagude;
And that the shame thou suffredst for his lusts
Reboundeth backe and stifeleth in his stocke,
Yet is not mischiefes measure all fulfild,
Nor wreake sufficient wrought. Thy murdered corse,
And dukedome rest for heavier vengeance cries.
Come, therefore, bloomes of setled mischiefes roote
Come ech thing els what furie can invent,
Wreake all at once! Infect the ayre with plagues,
Till bad to worse, till worse to worst be turnde!
Let mischiefes know no meane, nor plagues an end!
Let th' ofsprings sinne exceede the former stocke!
Let none have time to hate his former fault,
But still with fresh supplie let punisht cryme
Increase, till tyme it make a complet sinne!

* Ben Jonson opens his *Catiline* with the ghost of Sylla "ranging for revenge," and he was only thirteen years old when *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was performed at Greenwich before the Queen. Hughes doubtless had the commencement of Seneca's *Thyestes* in his mind, and throughout he has been indebted more or less to that and other classical authorities. The ghost of Polydorus opens the *Hecuba* of Euripedes. The ghost of Gorlois in this instance speaks the prologue to the tragedy.

† *Phere* is companion, and is most ordinarily applied to the male sex: Gorlois, however, refers to the infidelity of his wife.

Goe to : some fact which no age shall allowe
Nor yet conceale, some fact must needes be darde,
That for the horror great and outrage fell
Thereof, may well beseeme Pendragons broode
And first, while Arthur's navies homewards flott,
Triumphantly bedeckt with Romaine spoyles,
Let Guenover expresse what franticke moodes
Distract a wife, when wronging wedlockes rights,
Both fond and fell, she loves and loathes at once.
Let deepe dispaire pursue, till loathing life,
Her hatefull heade in cowle and cloister lurke.

Let traiterous Mordred keepe his sire from shoare;
Let Bryttaine rest a pray for foreine powers;
Let sworde and fire, still fedde with mutuall strife,
Tourne all the kings to ghoastes: let civill warres
And discorde swell till all the realme be torne!

Even in that soyle whereof my selfe was Duke,
Where first my spowse Igerna brake her vowe,
Where this ungracious ofspring was begotte
In Cornwell, there, let Mordreds death declare,
Let Arthurs fatall wound bewray the wrong,
The murther vile, the rape of wife and weale,
Wherewith their sire incenst both Gods and man.

Thus thus Pendragons seede, so sowne and reapte,
Thus cursed imps, ill-borne and worse consum'd,
Shall render just revenge for parents crimes,
And penance due t' asswadge my swelling wrath.

The whiles, O Cassiopœa, gembright signe,
Most sacred sight, and sweet cœlestiall starre,
This clymat's joy, plac'd in imperiall throne,
With fragrant olive branche portending peace:
And whosoe'r besides, ye heavenly powers,
(Her stately trayne with influence divine,
And milde aspect all prone to Bryttaine's good)
Foresee what present plagues doe threate this isle,
Prevent not this my wreake. For you their rests
A happier age, a thousand yeares to come;
An age for peace, religion, wealth, and ease,
When all the world shall wonder at your blisse:
That, that is yours! Leave this to Gorlois ghoast.

And see where coms one engine of my hate,
With moods and manners fit for my revenge. [Exit.

THE SECOND SCENE.

GUENEVORA, FRONIA.

Guenevora. And dares he after nine yeares space
returne,

And see her face whom he so long disdaine?
Was I then chose and wedded for his stale,
To looke and gape for his retirelesse sayles,
Puft back and fluttering spread to every winde?

O wrong content with no revenge: seeke out
Undared plagues; teach Mordred how to rage:
Attempt some bloodie, dreadfull, irkesome fact,
And such as Mordred would were rather his.

Why stayest? It must be done! let bridle goe:
Frame out some trap beyonde all vulgar guile,
Beyond Medeas wiles: attempt some fact
That any wight unwildie* of her selfe,
That any spowse unfaithfull to her phere,
Durst ever attempt in most dispaire of weale.
Spare no revenge, b't it poyson, knyfe, or fire!

Fronia. Good Madame, temper these outrageous
moodes,
And let not will usurpe, where wit should rule.

Guenevora. The wrath that breatheth blood doth
loath to lurke:
What reason most withholdes, rage wringes perforce.
I am disdaine: so will I not be long.
That very hour that he shall first arrive,
Shall be the last that shall aforde him life.

Though neither seas, nor lands, nor warres abroad
Sufficed for thy foyle, yet shalt thou finde
Farre woorse at home—thy deep displeased spowse.
Whate'er thou hast subdude in all thy stay
This hand shall now subdue; then stay thy fill.
What's this? my mind recoyles and yrkes these threats:
Anger delays, my grieve gynnes to asswage,

* *Unwildie*] i. e. unwieldy or *unmanageable* of herself—not having any controul over her actions. The sense is a little constrained.

My furie faintes, and sacred wedlockes faith
Presents it selfe. Why shunst thou fearfull wrath?
Adde coales a freshe—preserve me to this venge.

At lest exyle thy selfe to realmes unknowen,
And steale his wealth to helpe thy banish't state;
For flight is best. O, base and heartlesse feare!
Theft? Exyle? Flight? all these may fortune sende
Unsought; but thee beseemes more high revenge.

Come, spitefull fiends, come, heapes of furies fell,
Not one by one, but all at once! my breast
Raves not inough: it likes me to be filde
With greater monsters yet. My hart doth throbbe,
My liver boyles: somewhat my minde portendes,
Uncertayne what—but whatsoever it's huge.

So it excede, be what it will, it's well.
Omit no plague, and none will be inough.
Wrong cannot be reveng'd but by excesse.

Fronia. O spare this heate! you yeelde too much to
rage:

Y'are too unjust. Is there no meane in wrong?

Guenevora. Wrong claymes a meane when first you
offer wronge:

The meane is vaine when wrong is in revenge.
Great harmes cannot be hidde: the grieve is small,
That can receave advise, or rule it selfe.

Fronia. Hatred concealde doth often happe to hurte,
But once profest, it oftner failes revenge.
How better tho wert to repress your yre:
A ladies best revenge is to forgive.
What meane is in your hate? how much so'er
You can invent or dare, so much you hate.

Guenevora. And would you know what meane there
is in hate,

Call love to minde, and see what meane is there.

My love, redoubled love, and constant faith
Engaged unto Mordred workes so deepe,
That both my hart and marrow quite be burnt,
And synewes dried with force of woontlesse flames.

Desire to joy him still torments my mynde:
Feare of his want doth add a double grieve.

Loe, here the love that stirres this meanlesse hate.

Fronia. Echew it farre : such love impugnes the laws.

Guenevora. Unlawfull love doth like when lawfull lothes.

Fronia. And is your love of husband quite extinct?

Guenevora. The greater flame must needes delay the lesse :

Besides, his sore revenge I greatly feare.

Fronia. How can you then attempt a fresh offence?

Guenevora. Who can appoint a stint to her offence?

Fronia. But here the greatnesse of the fact should move.

Guenevora. The greater it, the fitter for my grieve.

Fronia. To kill your spowse?

Guenevora. A stranger and a foe.

Fronia. Your liedge and king.

Guenevora. He wants both realme and crowne.

Fronia. Nature affordes not to your sexe such strength.

Guenevora. Love, anguish, wroth will soon afforde inough.

Fronia. What rage is this?

Guenevora. Such as himselfe shall rue.

Fronia. Whom Gods doe presse inough will you annoy.

Guenevora. Whom Gods doe presse they bende ; whom man annoyes

He breakes.

Fronia. Your grieve is more then his desertos.

Ech fault requires an equall hate : be not severe

Where crimes be light. As you have felt so greeve.

Guenevora. And seems it light to want him nine yeare space?

Then, to be spoilde of one I hold more dear?

Thinke all too much, b't it ne'r so just, that feedes

Continuall grieve : the lasting woe is worst.

Fronia. Yet let your highnesse shun these desperate moodes :

Cast of this rage and fell disposed minde.

Put not shame quite to flight : have some regard

Both of your sexe and future fame of life.

Use no such cruell thoughts as farre exceede
A manly minde, much more a woman's hart.

Guenevora. Well; shame is not so quite exilde, but
that

I can and will respect your sage advise.
Your counsell I accept: give leave a while,
Till fiery wrath may slake and rage relent.

[*Exit Fronia.*]

THE THIRD SCENE.

GUENEVORA. ANGHARAT.

Guenevora. The love that for his rage will not be rulde
Must be restrainde: fame shall receive no foile.

Let Arthur live; whereof to make him sure
My selfe will dye, and so prevent his harmes.

Why stayest thou thus amazde, O, slouthfull wrath?
Mischiefe is meant—dispatch it on thy selfe.

Angharat. Her breast, not yet appeasde from former
rage,
Hath chaungde her wrath, which wanting meanes to
worke

An others woe (for such is furie's woont)
Seekes out his owne, and raves upon it selfe.

Asswage (alas) that over fervent ire:
Through too much anger you offend too much.
Thereby the rather you deserve to live
For seeming worthy in your selfe to dye.

Guenevora. Death is decreed; what kinde of death I
doubt:
Whether to dround or stifill up this breath
Or forcing bloud to dye with dint of knife.

All hope of prosperous hap is gone. My fame,
My faith, my spouse: no good is left unlost!
My selfe am left—there's left both seas and lands,
And sword, and fire, and chaines, and choice of harmes.

• These lines as they stand in the original are nonsense.

“Whether to dround or stifill up *this* breath,
On sorcing blood to dye with dint of knife.”

O gnawing easelesse grieve ! who now can heale
My maymed minde ? It must be healde by death.

Angharat. No mischief must be done whiles I be by ;
Or if there must, there must be more then one.

If death it be you seeke, I seeke it too ;

Alone you may not die, with me you may.

Guenevora. They that will drive th'unwilling to their
death,

Or frustrate death in those that faine would die,

Offend alike. They spoile that bootelesse spare.

Angharat. But will my teares, and mournings move
you nought ?

Guenevora. Then it is best to die when friends doe
mourne.

Angharat. Ech where is death ! the fates have well
ordainde,

That ech man may bereave himselfe of life

But none of death : death is so sure a doome,

A thousand wayes doe guide us to our graves.

Who then can ever come too late to that,

Whence, when h' is come, he never can returne ?

Or what availes to hasten on our ends,

And long for that which destenies have sworne !

Looke back in time : too late is to repent

When furious rage hath once cut of the choice.

Guenevora. Death is an end of paine, no paine it selfe.

Is't meete a plague for such excessive wrong

Should be so short ? Should one stroke answer all ?

And wouldst thou dye ? well, that contents the lawes :

What then for Arthurs ire ? What for thy fame,

Which thou hast stainde ? What for thy stock thou
shamst ?

Not death, nor life alone can give a full

Revenge : joine both in one—die and yet live :

Where paine may not be oft, let it be long.

Seeke out some lingring death, whereby thy corse

May neither touch the dead nor joy the quicke.

Die, but no common death : passe natures boundes.

Angharat. Set plaintes aside : despaire yeelds no re-
liefe ;

The more you search a wounde the more it stings.

Guenevora. When guiltie mindes torment them selves,
they heale,

Whiles woundes be cur'd, grieve is a salve for grieve.

Angharat. Grieve is no just esteemer of our deedes.
What so hath yet been done proceedes from chaunce.

Guenevora. The minde and not the chaunce doth
make th'unchast.

Angharat. Then is your *fault* from Fate; you rest
excusde.

None can be deemed faultie for her Fate.

Guenevora. No Fate, but manners fayle when we
offende.

Impute mishaps to Fates—to manners faultes.

Angharat. Love is an error that may blinde the best —.

Guenevora. A mightie error oft hath seemde a sinne —.
My death is vowed and death must needes take place —.

But such a death as stands with just remorse:
Death to the world and to her slipperie joyes:
A full divorce from all this courtly pompe,
Where dayly pennance done for each offence
May render due revenge for every wrong.

Which to accomplish, pray my dearest friends
That they forthwith, attyrde in saddest guise,
Conduct me to the Cloister next hereby,
There to professe, and to renounce the world.

Angharat. Alas! what chaunge were that! from king —
rooffes

To cloistered celles—to live and die at once!
To want your stately troupes, your friends and kinne —
To shun the shewes and sights of stately court;
To see in sort alive your countries death.
Yea, what so'er even death it selfe withdrawes
From any els, that life withdrawes from you.

Yet since your highnes is so fully bent
I will obay: the whiles asswage your grieve. [E.]

THE FOURTH SCENE.

MORDRED. GUENEVORA. CONAN.

Mordred. The houre which erst I alwaies feared
most,

The certaine ruine of my desperate state,
Is happened now! why turnst thou (minde) thy back?
Why at the first assault doest thou recoile?

Trust to't: the angry Heavens contrive some spight,
And dreadfull doome t'augment thy cursed hap.
Oppose to ech revenge thy guiltie heade,
And shun no paine, nor plague fit for thy fact.

What shouldst thou feare, that seest not what to
hope?*

No danger's left before—all's at thy backe.
He safely stands, that stands beyond his harmes.

Thine (death) is all that East and West can see:
For thee we live, our comming is not long:
Spare us but whiles we may prepare our graves.
Though thou wert slowe, we hasten of our selves.

The houre that gave did also take our lives:
No sooner men, then mortall were we borne.
I see mine ende drawes on, I feele my plagues.

Guenevora. No plague for one ill borne to dye as ill.

Mordred. O Queene! my sweete associate in this
plunge

And desperate plight, beholde, the time is come,
That either justifies our former faults,
Or shortly sets us free from every feare.

Guenevora. My feare is past, and wedlock love hath
woonne.

Retire we thither yet, whence first we ought
Not to have stir'd. Call backe chast faith againe.

* Milton has this thought, almost in the same words, allowing for the difference of an interrogation.

“For where no hope is left, is left no fear.”

Pur. Reg. III. 206.

The way that leads to good is ne'r to late :
Who so repents is guiltlesse of his crimes.

Mordred. What meanes this course? Is Arthur's
wedlocke safe,
Or can he love, that hath just cause to hate?

That nothing else were to be feard :
Is most apparent, that he hates at home
What e'r he be whose fansie strayes abroad.

Thinke, then, our love is not unknownen to him,
Whereof what patience can be safely hopte?
Nor love nor soveraigntie can beare a peere.

Guenevora. Why dost thou still stirre up my flames
delayde?

His strayes and errors must not move my minde :
A law for private men bindes not the king.

What, that I ought not to condemne my liedge,
Nor can, thus guiltie to myne owne offence!
Where both have done amisse, both will relent:
He will forgive that needes must be forgiven.

Mordred. A likely thing, your faults must make you
friends;

What sets you both at oddes must joine you both.
Thinke well, he casts already for revenge,
And how to plague us both. I know his law ;
A judge severe to us, milde to him selfe.

What then availes you to returne to late,
When you have past to farre? You feede vaine hopes.

Guenevora. The further past, the more this fault is
yours.

It serv'd your turne t'usurpe your father's crowne :
His is the crime, whom crime stands most in steede.

Mordred. They that conspire in faults offend a like :
Crime makes them equall whom it jointly staines.

If for my sake you then pertooke my guilt,
You cannot guiltlesse seeme: the crime was joint.

Guenevora. Well should* she seeme most guiltlesse
unto thee,
What e'r she be, that's guiltie for thy sake.

* The word *should* is accidentally repeated in this line in the old copy.

The remnant of that sober minde, which thou
Hadst heretofore nere vanquish't, yet resists.
Suppress, for shame, that impious mouth so taught,
And so much skil'd t'abuse the wedded bed.

Looke backe to former fates : Troy still had stoode
Had not her Prince made light of wedlocks lore.
The vice that threw downe Troy doth threat thy throne.
Take heed : there Mordred stands whence Paris fell.

[*Exit.*

Conan. Since that your highnes knowes for certaine
truth

What power your sire prepares to claime his right,
It neerely now concernes you to resolve
In humblest sort to reconcile your selfe
Gainst his returne.

Mordred. Will warre?

Conan. That lies in chaunce.

Mordred. I have as great a share in chaunce as he.

Conan. His waies be blinde that maketh chaunce his
guide.

Mordred. Whose refuge lies in chaunce, what dares
he not?

Conan. Warres were a crime farre worse then all the
rest.

Mordred. The safest passage is from bad to worse.

Conan. That were to passe too farre, and put no
meane.

Mordred. He is a foole that puts a meane in crimes.

Conan. But sword and fire would cause a common
wound.

Mordred. So sword and fire will often seare the soare.

Conan. Extremest cures must not be used first.

Mordred. In desperate times the head-long way is best.

Conan. Y'have many foes.

Mordred. No more then faythfull friends.

Conan. Trust to't, their faith will faint where fortune
failes.

Where many men pretend a love to one
Whose power may doe what good or harme he will,
'Tis hard to say which be his faithfull friends.

Dame Flatterie flitteth oft : she loves and hates
With time, a present friend an absent foe.

Mordred. But yet y'll hope the best.*

Conan. Even then you feare
The worst : feares follow hopes as fumes doe flames.
Mischief is sometimes safe, but ne'r secure.
The wrongfull Scepter's held with trembling hand.

Mordred. Whose rule wants right, his safety's in his
sword ;

For sword and sceptre comes to kings at once.

Conan. The kingliest point is to affect but right.

Mordred. Weake is the scepters hold that seekes but
right,

The care whereof hath bath danger'd many crownes.
As much as water differeth from the fire,
So much man's profit jarres from what is just.

A free recourse to wrong doth oft secure
The doubtfull seate, and plucks downe many a foe.
The sword must seldome cease : a soveraigne's hand
Is scantly safe, but whiles it smites. Let him
Usurpe no crowne that likes a guiltles life :
Aspiring power and justice sield agree.
He alwaies feares that shames to offer wrong.

Conan. What sonne would use such wrong against
his sire ?

Mordred. Come sonne, come sire, I first preferre my
selfe ;

And since a wrong must be, then it excels
When 'tis to gaine a crowne. I hate a peere ;
I loath, I yrke, I doe detest a head.
B't nature, be it reason, be it pride,
I love to rule ! my minde, nor with, nor by,
Nor after any claimes, but chiefe and first !

Conan. But thinke what fame and grievous bruits
would runne
Of such disloyall and unjust attempts.

Mordred. Fame goes not with our ghosts : the sense-
less soule

* " But yet y'll hope the best" is by mistake given to Conan in the old copy.

Once gone, neglects what vulgar brute reports.
She is both light and vaine.

Conan. She noteth though.

Mordred. She feareth states.*

Conan. She carpeth ne'r the lesse.

Mordred. She's soone suppress.

Conan. As soone she springs againe.

Toungs are untam'de, and fame is envyes dogge,

That absent barks, and present fawnes as fast.

It fearing dares, and yet hath never done,

But dures: though death redeeme us from all foes

Besides, yet death redeemes us not from toungs.†

Mordred. E'r Arthur land, the sea shall blush with
blood,

And all the stronds with smoaking slaughters reeke.

Now (Mars) protect me in my first attempt!

If Mordred scape, this realme shall want no warres.

[*Ereunt.*

CHORUS.

1.

See here the drifts of Gorlois, Cornish Duke,

And deepe desire to shake his Soveraignes throne.

How foule his fall, how bitter his rebuke,

Whiles wife, and weale, and life, and all be gone!

He now in hell tormented wants that good.

Lo, lo, the end of trayterous bones and blood!

2.

Pendragon broylde with flames of filthy fires,

By Merlin's mists injoyde Igerna's bed;

Next spoiled Gorlois, doubling his desires;

Then was himselfe through force of poyson sped.

Who sowes in ginne, in sinne shall reap his paine:

The doome is sworne—death guerdons death
again.

* In the old copy Mordred's reply is made a part of Conan's observation.

† By an apparent error in the original the five preceding lines are given to Mordred.

3.

Whiles Arthur warres abroad and reapes renowne,
 Guenevora preferres his sonnes desire ;
 And trayterous Mordred still usurpes the crowne,
 Affording fuell to her quenchlesse fire.

But death's too good, and life too sweete for thease,
 That wanting both should taste of neither's ease.

4.

In Rome the gaping gulfe would not decrease,
 Till Curtius corse had closde her yawning jawes :
 In Theb's the rotte and murreine would not cease,
 Till Laius broode had paide for breach of lawes :
 In Brytain warres and discord will not stent,
 Till Uther's line and offspring quite be spent.

The Argument of the second Act.

1. In the first Scene, a Nuntio declareth the successe of Arthur's warres in France, and Mordred's foile, that resisted his landing.

2. In the second Scene, Mordred enraged at the overthrow voweth a second battaile, notwithstanding Conans disswasion to the contrarie.

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Nymphes apparrailed accordingly, the first holding a Cornucopia in her hand, the second a golden braunch of olive, the third a sheaffe of corne. These orderly, one after another, offered these presents to the king who scornefully refused : a second after which, there came a man bareheaded, with long black shagged haire down to his shoulders, apparrailed with an Irish jacket and shirt, having an Irish dagger by his side, and a dart in his hand. Who first with a threatning countenance looking about, and then spying the king, did furiously chase and drive him into Mordred's house. The king represented Mordred; the three Nymphes with their proffers the treatice of peace, for the which Arthur sent Gawin with an Herault unto Mordred, who rejected it : the Irishman signified Revenge and Furie, which Mordred conceived after his foile on the shoares, whereunto Mordred headlong yeeldeth himselfe.

THE SECOND ACT AND FIRST SCENE.

NUNTIUS.

Nuntius. Lo, here at length the stately type of Troy,
And Brytain land the promist seate of Brute,
Deckt with so many spoyles of conquered kings !
Haile native soyle, these nine yeares space unseene !
To thee hath long-renowmed Rome at last
Help up her hands, bereaft of former pompe.
But first, inflamde with woonted valures heate,
Amidst our sorest siedge and thickest broyles
She stoutly fought, and fiercely waged warres.

Tiberius courage gave, upbraiding oft
The Romane force, their woonted lucke, and long
Retained rule by warres throughout the world.
What shame it were, since such atchived spoiles,
And conquests gaine both farre and wide, to want
Of courage then, when most it should be mov'd !

How Brytaines erst paide tribute for their peace,
But now rebell and dare them at their doores.
For what was Fraunce but theirs? Herewith incenst
They fiercely rav'd, and bent their force a fresh.

Which Arthur spying, cryed with thundring voyce;
Fye (Brytaines) fye! what hath bewicht you thus?
So many nations foilde, must Romans foile?
What slouth is this? Have you forgot to warre,
Which n'er knew houre of peace? turne to your foes,
Where you may bath in blood and fight your fill.
Let courage worke! what can he not that dares?
Thus he, puissant guide in doubtfull warres,
Ashamde to shun his foes, inflamde his friends.

Then yeelding to his stately stead the raignes,
He furious drives the Romaine troupes about:
He plies each place, least fates mought alter ought,
Pursuing hap, and urging each successe.
He yeelds in nought, but instantly persists
In all attempts, wherein what so withstands
His wish, he joyes to worke away by wracke;
And matching death to death, no passage seekes
But what destruction works with blade or blood.
He scornes the yeelded way: he fiercely raves
To breake and bruse the ranks in thickest throngs,
All headlong bent and prone to present spoile.

The foes inforc'd withstand; but much dismaide.
They senselesse fight, while millions lose their lives.
At length Tiberius, pierst with point of speare,
Doth bleeding fall, engoard with deadly wound.
Hereat the rest recoil and headlong flie,
Each man to save himselfe. The battaile quails,
And Brytaine's winne unto their most renowne.

Then Arthur tooke Tiberius breathlesse corse,
And sent it to the Senators at Rome,
With charge to say:—This is the tribute due
Which Arthur ought; as time hereafter serves
He'il pay the like againe, the whiles he rests
Your debtor thus.—But O! this sweete successe
Pursu'd with greater harmes, turn'd soone to sowre.

For lo, when forreine soiles and seas were past

With safe returne, and that the king should land,
Who but his onely sonne (O outrage rare)
With hugie hoast withstood him on the shoare !
There were preparte the forreine aides from farre ;
There were the borrowed powers of divers kings ;
There were our parents, brethren, sonnes and kinne,
Their wrath, their ire ; there Mordred was thy rage.
Where erst we sought abroad for foes to foile,
Beholde, our Fates had sent us foes unsought.
When forreine realmes supplanted want supplie,
O blessed home, that hath such boonne in store !

But let this part of Arthur's prowesse lurke,
Nor let it e'r appeare by my report,
What monstrous mischiefes rave in civill warres.
O, rather let due teares and waylings want !
Let all in silence sinke what hence insu'd.
What best deserveth mention here is this :
That Mordred vanquisht trusted to his flight,
That Arthur ech where victor is returnd.

And lo, where Mordred comes with heavy head :
He wieldes no slender waight that weilds a crowne.

[*Exit.*

THE SECOND SCENE.

MORDRED. CONAN.

Mordred. And hath he wonne ? Be stronds and shoares
possest ?

Is Mordred foilde ? the realme is yet unwonne,
And Mordred lives, reserv'd for Arthur's death !
Well, 'twas my first conflict : I knew not yet
What warres requir'd ; but now my sworde is flesht,
And taught to goare and bath in hoatest bloode.

Then thinke not Arthur that the crowne is wonne !
Thy first successe may rue our next assault ;
Even at our next incounter (hap when 'twill)
I vowe by Heaven, by Earth, by Hell, by all,
That either thou, or I, or both shall dye !

Conan. Nought should be rashly vowde against
your sire.

3.

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Their wrath, their ire ; there Mordred was thy rage.
Where erst we sought abroad for foes to foile,
Beholde, our Fates had sent us foes unsought.
When forreine realmes supplanted want supplie,
O blessed home, that hath such boonne in store !

But let this part of Arthur's prowesse lurke,
Nor let it e'r appeare by my report,
What monstrous mischiefes rave in civill warres.
O, rather let due teares and waylings want !
Let all in silence sinke what hence insu'd.
What best deserveth mention here is this :
That Mordred vanquisht trusted to his flight,
That Arthur ech where victor is returnd.

And lo, where Mordred comes with heavy head :
He wieldes no slender waight that weilds a crowne.

[*Exit.*

THE SECOND SCENE.

MORDRED. CONAN.

Mordred. And hath he wonne ? Be stronds and shoares
possest ?

Is Mordred foilde ? the realme is yet unwonne,
And Mordred lives, reserv'd for Arthur's death !
Well, 'twas my first conflict : I knew not yet
What warres requir'd ; but now my sworde is flesht,
And taught to goare and bath in hoatest bloode.

Then thinke not Arthur that the crowne is wonne !
Thy first successe may rue our next assault ;
Even at our next incounter (hap when 'twill)
I vowe by Heaven, by Earth, by Hell, by all,
That either thou, or I, or both shall dye !

Conan. Nought should be rashly vowe against
your sire.

Mordred. Whose breast is free from rage may soone
b'advise.

Conan. The best redresse from rage is to relent.

Mordred. 'Tis better for a king to kill his foes.

Conan. So that the subjects also judge them foes.

Mordred. The subjects must not judge their king's
decrees.

Conan. The subjects force is great.

*Mordred.** Greater the kings.

Conan. The more you may, the more you ought to
feare.

Mordred. He is a foole that feareth what he may.

Conan. Not what you may, but what you ought is
just.

Mordred. He that amongst so many, so unjust,
Seekes to be just, seekes perill to himselfe.

Conan. A greater perill comes by breach of lawes.

Mordred. The lawes do licence as the Soveraigne
lists.

Conan. Lest ought he list whom lawes doe licence
most.

Mordred. Imperiall power abhorres to be restrainde.

Conan. As much doe meaner groomes† to be com-
peld

Mordred. The fates have heav'de and raisde my
force on high.

Conan. The gentler should you presse those that are
low.

Mordred. I would be feard.

Conan. The cause why subjects hate.

Mordred. A kingdom's kept by feare.

Conan. And lost by hate.

He feares as man himselfe whom many feare.

Mordred. The timerous subject dares attempt no
chaundge.

Conan. What dares not desperate dread?

* Arthur's name is misprinted for that of Mordred in this place
in the original.

† It stands *roomes* in the old copy, but to make sense of the line
we must read *groomes*.

*Mordred.** What torture threats.

Conan. O spare! tweare safer to be lovde.

Mordred. As safe

To be obaide.

Conan. Whiles you command but well.

Mordred. Where rulers dare commaund but what is well,

Powre is but prayer, commaundment but request.

Conan. If powre be joynde with right, men must obay.

Mordred. My will must go for right.

Conan. If they assent.

Mordred. My sword shall force assent.

Conan. No—Gods forbid.

Mordred. What! shall I stande whiles Arthur sheads my bloode?

And must I yeelde my necke unto the axe?

Whom fates constrayne, let him forgoe his blisse;

But he that needlesse yeldes unto his bane,

When he may shunne, doth well deserve to loose

The good he cannot use. Who would sustaine

A baser life, that may maintaine the best?

We cannot part the crowne: a regall throne

Is not for two: the scepter fittes but one.

But whether is the fitter of us two,

That must our swordes decerne, and shortly shall.

Conan. How much were you to be renowned more,

If casting off these ruinous attempts,

You would take care how to supplie the losse,

Which former warres and forraine broyles have wrought;

Howe to deserve the people's heartes with peace,

With quiet rest, and deepe desired ease:

Not to increase the rage that long hath raignde,

Nor to destroy the realme you seeke to rule.

Your father rearde it up, you plucke it downe.

You loose your country whiles you winne it thus:

To make it yours you strive to make it none.

* This reply, which belongs to Mordred, is given to Conan in the old copy.

Where kings impose too much the commons grudge;
Goodwill withdrawes; assent becomes but slowe.

Mordred. Must I to gaine renowne incurre my
plague,
Or hoping prayse sustaine an exiles life?
Must I for countries ease disease my selfe,
Or for their love dispise my own estate?†

No. 'Tis my happe that Brytain serves my tourne;
That feare of me doth make the subjects crouch;
That what they grudge they do constrayned yeeld.
If their assents be slowe, my wrath is swift:
When favour failes to bend, let furie breake.
If they be yet to learne, let terrour teach
What kings may doe, what subjects ought to beare.
Then is a kingdome at a wished staye
When whatsoever the sovereigne willes, or nilles,
Men be compelde as well to praise as beare,
And subjects willes inforc'd against their willes.

Conan. But who so seekes true praise and just re-
nowne,
Would rather seeke their praying heartes then tongues.

Mordred. True praise may happen to the basest
groome;
A forced prayse to none but to a prince.
I wish that most that subjects most repine.

Conan. But yet where warres doe threaten your
estate,
There needeth friendes to fortifie your crowne.

Mordred. Ech crowne is made of that attractive
mould,
That of it selfe it drawes a full defence.

* Instead of the words "commons grudge," "Realme envies" has been substituted and wafered over the text. The alteration, like some others, seems to have been originally pasted upon the objectionable passage.

† The following were substituted for the four preceding lines.

"The first art in a kingdome is to scorne
The envie of the realme. He cannot rule
That feares to be envide. What can divorce
Envie from Soveraigntie? Must my deserts?"

Conan. That is a just and no usurped crowne ;
 nd better were an exiles life, then thus
 isloyally to wronge your sire and liedge.
 inke not that impious crimes can prosper long :
 time they scape, in time they be repaide.

Mordred. The hugest crimes bring best successe to
 some.

Conan. Those some be rare.

Mordred. Why may not I be rare ?

Conan. It was their hap.

Mordred. It is my hope.

Conan. But hope
 ay misse, where hap doth hurle.

Mordred. So hap may hit,
 here hope doth aime.

Conan. But hap is last, and rules
 e stearne.

Mordred. So hope is first and hoists the saile.

Conan. Yet feare ; the first and last doe sielde agree.

Mordred. Nay dare ; the first and last have many
 meanes.

t cease at length ; your speach molests me much.

r minde is fixt : give Mordred leave to doe

at Conan neither can allow, nor like.

Conan. But loe, an Herault sent from Arthurs hoast.

ds graunt his message may portend our good.*

THE THIRD SCENE.

HERAULT, GAWIN, MORDRED.

Herault. Your sire, (O Prince) considering what
 distresse

realme sustaines by both your mutuall warres,

h sent your brother Gawin, Albane king,

treate of truce, and to imparle of peace.

It does not appear whether Conan goes out, or stands by lis-
 g to the dialogue between Mordred and Gawin in the follow-
 scene.

Mordred. Speake, brother: what commaundment sends our sire?

What message doe you bring? My life or death?

Gawin. A message farre unmeete, most needfull tho.
The sire commaunds not where the sonne rebels:
His love descends too deepe to wish your death.

Mordred. And mine ascends too high to wish his life.

Gawin. Yet thus he offreth. Though your faults
be great,

And most disloyall, to his deepe abuse,
Yet yeelde your selfe, he 'il be as prone to grace
As you to ruth—an uncle, sire, and liedge.
And fitter were your due submission done,
Then wrongfull warres to reave his right and realme.

Mordred. It is my fault that he doth want his right:
It is his owne to vexe the realme with warres.

Gawin. It is his right that he attempts to seeke:
It is your wrong that driveth him thereto.

Mordred. 'Tis his insatiate minde, that is not so
content,
Which hath so many kingdomes more besides.

Gawin. The more you ought to tremble at his
powre.

Mordred. The greater is my conquest if I winne.

Gawin. The more your foile if you should hap to
loose:

For Arthur's fame and vallure's such, as you
Should rather imitate, or at the least
Envie, if hope of better fansies failde:
For whereas envie raignes, though it repines,
Yet doth it feare a greater then it selfe.

Mordred. He that envies the valure of his foe
Detects a want of valure in himselfe.
He fondly fights that fights with such a foe,
Where t'were a shame to loose, no praise to winne;
But with a famous foe, succede what will,
To win is great renowne, to loose lesse foile.
His conquests, were they more, dismaie me not:
The oftner they have beene the more they threat:
No danger can be thought both safe and oft;

And who hath oftner waged warres then he?
Escapes secure him not: he owes the price:
Whom chaunce hath often mist, chaunce hits at length;
Or if that chaunce have furthered his successe,
So may she mine, for chaunce hath made me king.

Gawin. As chaunce hath made you king, so chaunce
may change.

Provide for peace: that's it the highest piers,
No state except, even conquerours ought to seeke.

Remember Arthurs strength, his conquests late,
His fierie minde, his high aspiring heart.

Marke then the oddes: he expert, you untried;
He ripe, you greene. Yeelde you whiles yet you may;
He will not yeelde: he winnes his peace with warres.

Mordred. If chaunce may chaunge, his chaunce was
last to winne;

The likelier now to loose. His hautie heart
And minde I know: I feele mine owne no lesse.
As for his strength and skill, I leave to happe.
Where many meete, it lies not all in one.

What though he vanquisht have the Romaine troupes,
That bootes him not: him selfe is vanquisht here.
Then waigh your wordes againe: if conquerours ought
To seeke for peace, the conquered must perforce.

But he'll not yeelde; he'il purchase peace with
warres.

Well, yeelde that will; I neither will nor can.
Come peace, come warres, chuse him; my dangers his,
His saffetie mine: our states doe stande alike.
If peace be good, as good for him as me;
If warres be good, as good for me as him.

Gawin. What cursed warres (alas) were those,
wherein

Both sonne and sire shoulde so oppose themselves!
Him whome you nowe, unhappie man, pursue,
If you should winne your selfe would first bewayle.
Give him his crowne: to keepe it perill breeds.

Mordred. The crowne Ile keepe my selfe, insue
what will.

Death must be once; how soon I lest respect.
He best provides that can beware in time,

Not why nor when, but whence and where he fals.

What foole, to live a year or twaine in rest,
Would loose the state and honour of a crowne?

Gawin. Consider then your fathers grieffe and want,
Whom you bereave of kingdome, realme and crowne.

Mordred. Trust me, a huge and mightie kingdome
'tis

To beare the want of kingdome, realme and crowne.

Gawin. A common want which woorkes ech world-
ings woe,

That many have too much, but none inough.

It were his praise could he be so content,

Which makes you guiltie of the greater wrong.

Wherefore thinke on the doubtfull state of warres.

Where Mars hath sway, he keepes no certayne course:

Sometimes he lettes the weaker to prevaile,

Some times the stronger stoupes: hope feare and rage

With eylesse lott rules all uncertayne good,

Most certaine harmes be his assured happes.

No lucke can last; now here, now there it lights;

No state alike, chaunce blindly snatcheth all,

And fortune maketh guiltie whom she listes.

Mordred. Since, therefore, feare and hope and happe
in warres

Be all obscure till their successe be seene,

Your speech doth rather drive me on to trie,

And trust them all, mine onely refuge now.

Gawin. And feare you not so strange and uncouth
warres?

Mordred. No, were they warres that grew from out
the ground.

Gawin. Nor yet your sire so huge, your selfe so
small?

Mordred. The smallest axe may fell the hugest oake.

Gawin. Nor that in felling him, your selfe may fall?

Mordred. He falleth well, that falling fells his foe.

Gawin. Nor common chaunce, whereto each man is
thrall?

Mordred. Small manhood were to turne my backe
to chaunce.

Gawin. Nor that if chaunce afflict kings brooke it not?

Mordred. I beare no breast so unpreparde for harmes.

Even that I hold the kingliest point of all
To brooke afflictions well; and by how much
The more his state and tottering empire sagges,
To fixe so much the faster foote on ground.

No feare but doth forejudge, and many fall
Into their fate, whiles they doe feare their fate.
Where courage quailles, the feare exceeds the harme:
Yea, worse than warre it selfe is feare of warre.*

Gawin. Warre seemeth sweete to such as have not tried;

But wisdomes wils we should forecast the worst.
The end allowes the act: that plot is wise
That knowes his meanes, and least relies on chance.
Eschue the course where errour lurkes; there growes
But grieve where paine is spent, no hope to speed.

Strive not above your strength; for where your force
Is over matche with your attempts, it faints,
And fruitlesse leaves what bootlesse it began.

Mordred. All things are rulde in constant course:
no fate

But is foreset—the first daie leades the last.
No wisdomes, then, but difference in conceit
Which workes in many men as many mindes.

You love the meane and followe virtues race:
I like the top and aime at greater blisse.

You rest content: my minde aspires to more:
In briefe, you feare, I hope; you doubt, I dare.

Since, then, the sagest counsailes are but strifes
Where equall wits may wreast each side alike,
Let counsaile go: my purpose must proceede.
Each likes his course, mine owne doth like me best.

* *Pejor est bello timor ipse belli—*

Seneca, *Thyestes*, A. III. Chor.

Jasper Heywood (*Thyestes faithfully Englished*. London: 1560)
thus translates this passage

“Worse is then warre it selfe the feare of fyght.”

Wherefore e'r Arthur breath or gather strength,
 Assault we him, least he assault us first.
 He either must destroye, or be destroy'd :
 The mischiefes in the midst ; catch he that can.

Gawin. But will no reason rule that desperate
 minde?

Mordred. A fickle minde that every reason rules.
 I rest resolv'd, and to my sire say thus :—

If here he stay but three daies to an end,
 And not forthwith discharge his band and hoast,
 'Tis Mordred's oath, assure himselfe to die.
 But if he finde his courage so to serve,
 As for to stand to his defence with force,
 In Cornewalle, if he dare, I'll trye it out.

Gawin. O strange contempt ! like as the craggy
 rocke
 Resists the streames and flings the waltering waves
 Aloofe, so he rejects and scornes my words. [Exit.*]

THE FOURTH SCENE.

GILLA, GILLAMOR, CHELDRICUS,
 DUX PICTORUM, CONAN.

Mordred. Lo, where (as they decreed) my faithfull
 friends
 Have kept their time. Be all your powers repaired ?

Gilla. They be, and all with ardent mindes : to
 Mars
 They cry for warres, and longing for th' allarme,
 Even now they wish t'incounter with their foes.

Mordred. What could be wisht for more ? puissant
 king,
 For your great helpe and valiant Irish force,
 If I obtaine the conquest in these warres,
 Whereas my father claimes a tribute due
 Out of your realme, I here renounce it quite :
 And if assistance neede in doubtfull times,
 I will not faile to aide you with the like.

Gillamor. It doth suffice me to discharge my realme,

* i. e. Gawin : the Herald went out before.

Or at the least, to wreke me on my foes.
I rather like to live your friend and piere,
Then rest in Arthur's homage and disgrace.

Mordred. Right noble duke, through whom the
Saxons vowe

Their lives with mine, for my defence in warres,
If we prevaile and may subdue our foes,
I will, in lieu of your so high deserts,
Give you and yours all Brytish lands that lie
Betweene the flood of Humber and the Scottes :
Besides as much in Kent as Horsus and —
Hengistus had, when Vortigern was king.

Cheldrichus. Your gracious proffers I accept with
thankes ;

Not for the gaine, but for the good desire
I have henceforth to be your subject here
May thereby take effect ; which I esteeme
More then the rule I beare in Saxon soile.

Mordred. (Renowmed lord) for your right hardy Piéts
And chosen warriors to maintaine my cause,
If our attempts receive a good successe,
The Albane crowne I give to you and yours.

Dux Pictorum. Your highnes bountie in so high de-
gree,

Were cause inough to move me to my best :
But sure yourselfe, without regard of meede,
Should finde both me and mine at your commaund.

Mordred. Lord Gilla, if my hope may take successe,
And that I be thereby undoubted king,
The Cornish dukedome I allot to you.

Gilla. My liedge, to further your desir'd attempts,
I joyfully shall spend my dearest blood :
The rather, that I found the king, your sire,
So heavy lord to me, and all my stocke,

Mordred. Since then our rest is on't, and we agreed,
To warre it out, what resteth now but blowes ?
Drive destnies on with swords, Mars frames the meanes !
Henceforth what Mordred may, now lies in you.
Ere long, if Mars insue with good successe,
Looke, whatsoe'r it be that Arthur claimes
By right or wrong, or conquests gaind with blood

In Brytaine, or abroad, is mine to give :—
To shewe, I would have said : I cannot give
What every hand must give unto it selfe.
Whereof who lists to purchase any share,
Now let him seeke and winne it with his sword :
The fates have laid it open in the field.

What starres (O heavens) or poles, or powers divine
Doe graunt so great rewards for those that winne !
Since then our common good, and ech man's care
Requires our joint assistance in these toyles,
Shall we not hazard our extreamest hap,
And rather spend our fates, then spare our foes ?

The cause I care for most is chiefly yours :
This hand and hart shall make mine owne secure.
That man shall see me foiled by my selfe,
What'er he be, that sees my foe unfoilde.

Fear not the feild because of Mordred's faults,
Nor shrink one jotte the more for Arthur's right.
Full safely fortune guideth many a guilt,
And fates have none but wretches whom they wrenche.

Wherefore make speede to cheare your souldiers harts,
That to their fires you yet may adde more flames.
The side that seekes to winne in civill warres
Must not content it selfe with woonted heate.

[*Exeunt omnes, præter Mordred and Conan.*]

Conan. Would God your highnes had beene more
advise,

Ere too much will had drawn your wits too farre !
Then had no warres indangered you nor yours,
Nor Mordreds cause required forreine care.

Mordred. A troubled head : my minde revolts to
feare,

And beares my body backe. I inwards feeble my fall :
My thoughts misgeve me much. Downe terror ! I
Perceive mine ende, and desperate though, I must
Despise dispaire, and somewhat hopelesse hope.
The more I doubt the more I dare : by feare
I finde the fact is fittest for my fame.

What'though I be a ruine to the realme,
And fall my selfe therewith ? no better end :

His last mishaps doe make a man secure.
Such was king Priams ende, who, when he dyed,
Closde and wrapt up his kingdome in his death.
A solemne pompe, and fit for Mordred's minde,
To be a grave and tombe to all his realme. [*Exeunt.*]

CHORUS.

1.

Ye princely peeres, extold to seates of state,
Seeke not the faire that soone will turne to fowle :
Oft is the fall of high and hovering fate,
And rare the roome which time doth not controwle.
The safest seate is not on highest hill,
Where windes and stormes and thunders thumpe
their ill :
Farre safer were to follow sound advise,
Then for such pride to pay so deare a price.

2.

The mounting minde that climes the hauty cliffes,
And soaring seekes the tip of lofty type,
Intoxicats the braine with guiddy drifts,
Then rowles and reeles and falles at length plum ripe.
Loe, heaving hie is of so small forecast,
To totter first, and tumble downe at last.
Yet Pægasus still reares himselfe on hie,
And coltishly doth kicke the cloudes in skie.

3.

Who sawe the grieve engraven in a crowne,
Or knew the bad and bane whereto it's bound,
Would never sticke to throwe and fling it downe,
Nor once vouchsafe to heave it from the ground.
Such is the sweete of this ambitious powre,
No sooner had, then turnes eftsoones to sowre :
Atchiev'd with envie, exercisde with hate,
Garded with feare, supported with debate.

4.

O restlesse race of high aspyring head!
 O worthlesse rule, both pittied and envied!
 How many millions to their losse you lead,
 With love and lure of kingdomes blisse untryed!
 So things untasted cause a quenchlesse thirst,
 Which, were they knowne, would be refused first:
 Yea, oft we see, yet seeing cannot shonne
 The fact, we finde as fondly dar'd as donne.

The Argument of the third Act.

1. In the first scene Cador and Howell incite and exhort Arthur unto warre: who mooved with fatherly affection towards his sonne, notwithstanding their perswasions, resolveth upon peace.

2. In the second scene an Herault is sent from Mordred to commaund Arthur to discharge his armies under paine of death, or otherwise, if he dare, to trie it by battaile.

3. In the third scene Arthur calleth his assistants and soldiers together, whom he exhorteth to pursue their foes.

4. In the fourth scene Arthur, between grieve and despaire, resolveth to warre.

The Argument and manner of the third dumb shewe.

During the musicke after the second act, there came upon the stage two gentlemen attyred in a peaceable manner, which brought with them a table, carpet and cloth: and then having covered the table they furnisht it with incense on the one ende, and banquetting dishes on the other ende: Next there came two gentlemen apparelled like souldiers, with two naked swordes in their handes, the which they laid a crosse upon the table. Then there came two sumptuously attyred and warlike, who spying this preparation, smelled the incense and tasted the banquet. During the which there came a Messenger and delivered certaine letters to those two that fedde on the dainties:

who, after they had well viewed and perused the letters, furiously flung the banquet under feete, and violently snatching the swordes unto them, they hastily went their way. By the two first that brought in the banquet was meant the servaunts of peace: by the second two were meant the servaunts of warre: by the two last were meant Arthur and Cador. By the Messenger and his letters was meant the defiance from Mordred.

THE THIRD ACT AND FYRSTE* SCENE.

ARTHUR, CADOR, HOWELL.

Arthur. Is this the welcome that my realme prepares?

Be these the thanks I winne for all my warres?

Thus to forbid me land? to slaie my friends?

To make their bloud distaine my countrie shoares?

My sonne (belike) least that our force should faint
For want of warres, preparte us warres himselfe.

He thought (perhaps) it mought impaire our fame

If none rebeld, whose foile might praise our power.

Is this the fruit of Mordred's forward youth,
And tender age, discreet beyond his yeres?

O false and guilfull life! O craftie world!

How cunningly convaiest thou fraude unseene!

Th'ambitious seemeth meeke, the wanton chast;

Disguised vice for vertue vants it selfe.

Thus, (Arthur,) thus hath fortune plaid her part,
Blinde for thy weale, cleare sighted for thy woe.

Thy kingdome's gone, thy phere affordes no faith:

Thy sonne rebels: of all thy wonted pompe

No jot is left, and fortune hides her face.

No place is left for prosperous plight: mishaps

Have roome and waies to runne and walke at will.

Lo (Cador) both our states, your daughters trust,

* It had been originally printed *Second*, but corrected by pasting *Fyrste* over it.

My sonn's respect, our hopes reposde in both !

Cador. The time (puissant Prince) permits not now
To moane our wrongs, or search each severall sore.
Since Arthur thus hath ransackt all abroad
What mervaille ist if Mordred rave at home ?
When farre and neare your warres had worne the
world,

What warres were left for him but civill warres ?

All which requires revenge with sword and fire
And to pursue your foes with presence* force.
In just attempts Mars gives a rightfull doome.

Arthur. Nay, rather (*Cador*) let them runne their
race,

And leave the heavens revengers of my wrong.
Since Brytaines prosperous state is thus debasde
In servile sort to Mordred's cursed pride,
Let me be thrall and leade a private life :
None can refuse the yoake his countrie beares.
But as for warres, insooth, my flesh abhorres,
To bid the battayle to my proper bloud.
Great is the love which nature doth inforce
From kin to kin, but most from sire to sonne.

Howell. The noble necke disdaines the servile yoke :
Where rule hath pleasde, subjection seemeth strange.
A king ought alwaies to preferre his realme
Before the love he beares to kin or sonne.

Your realme destroide is neere restord againe,
But time may send you kine and sonnes inough.

Arthur. How hard it is to rule th' aspiring minde,
And what a kingly point it seemes to those
Whose lordlie hands the stately scepter swaies,
Still to pursue the drift they first decreed,
My wonted minde and kingdome lets me know.

Thinke not but if you drive this hazard on,
He desperate will resolve to winne or die :
Whereof who knowes which were the greater guilt,
The sire to slaie the sonne, or sonne the sire ?

Cador. If bloudie Mars doe so extreamly swaie,

* Sic. Qy. present.

That either sonne or sire must needs be slaine,
Geve lawe the choice : let him die that deserves.
Each impotent affection notes a want.

No worse a vice then lenitie in kings ;
Remisse indulgence soone undoes a realme :
He teacheth how to sinne that winkes at sinnes,
And bids offend that suffereth an offence.
The onely hope of leave increaseth crimes,
And he that pardoneth one, emboldneth all
To breake the lawes. Each patience fostereth wrongs.

But vice severely punisht faints at foote,
And creepes no further off then where it falls.
One sower example will prevent more vice
Then all the best perswasions in the world.
Rough rigour lookes out right, and still prevailes :
Smooth mildnesse lookes too many waies to thrive.

Wherefore, since Mordreds crimes have wrongd the
lawes

In so extreame a sort, as is too strange,
Let right and justice rule with rigours aide,
And worke his wracke at length, although too late ;
That damning lawes, so damned by the lawes,
Hee may receive his deepe deserved doome.

So let it fare with all that dare the like :
Let sword, let fire, let torments be their end.
Severitie upholds both realme and rule.

Arthur. Ah, too severe ! farre from a father's minde.
Compassion is as fit for kings as wrath.
Lawes must not lowre ; rule oft admitteth ruthe.
So hate, as if there were yet cause to love :
Take not their lives as foes which may be friends.
To spoile my sonne were to dispoile my selfe :
Oft whiles we seeke our foes, we seeke our foiles.
Lets rather seeke how to allure his minde
With good deserts : deserts may winne the worst.

Howell. Where Cato first had saved a theefe from
death,
And after was himselfe condemnd to die,
When else not one would execute the doome,
Who but the theefe did undertake the taske ?

If too much bountie worke so bad effects
In thanklesse friends, what for a ruthlesse foe?
Let lawes have still their course: the ill disposde
Grudge at their lives to whom they owe too much.

Arthur. But yet where men with reconciled mindes
Renue their love with recontinued grace,
Attonement frames them friends of former foes,
And makes the moodes of swelling wrath to swage.
No faster friendship than that growes from grieve,
When melting mindes with mutuall ruth relent.
How close the severed skinne unites againe,
When salves have smoothlie heald the former hurts!

Cador. I never yet sawe hurt so smoothly heald,
But that the skarre bewraid the former wound:
Yea, where the salve did soonest close the skinne,
The sore was oftner covered up than cur'de:
Which festering deepe and filde within, at last
With sodaine breach grew greater than at first.

What then for mindes which have revenging moodes,
And ne'r forget the crosse they forced beare?
Whereto if reconcilement come, it makes
The t'one secure, whiles t'other workes his will.

Attonement sield defeates, but oft deferres
Revenge: beware a reconciled foe.

Arthur. Well, what availes to linger in this life,
Which fortune but reserves for greater grieve?
This breath drawes on but matter of mishap:
Death onely frees the guiltlesse from annoies.
Who so hath felt the force of greedie fates,
And 'dur'de the last decree of grislie death,
Shall never yeeld his captive armes to chaines,
Nor drawne in triumph decke the victor's pompe.

Howell. What meane these wordes? Is Arthur
forc'de to feare?

Is this the fruit of your continuall warres,
Even from the first remembrance of your youth?

Arthur. My youth (I graunt) and prime of budding
yeares,
Puft up with pride and fond desire of praise,
Foreweening nought what perils might insue,

Adventured all and raught to will the raignes :*

But now this age requires a sager course,
Aud will, advise by harmes, to wisdomes yeelds.
Those swelling spirits, the selfesame cause which
first

Set them on gog, even fortunes favours quail'd,
And now mine oftneest skapes doe skare me most.
I feare the trappe whereat I oft have tript :
Experience tells me plain that chance is fraile,
And oft, the better past, the worse to come.

Cador. Resist these doubts: 'tis ill to yeeld to
harmes.

'Tis safest then to dare, when most you feare.

Arthur. As safe sometimes to feare, when most we
dare.

A causelesse courage gives repentance place.

Howell. If fortune fawne.

Arthur. Each waie on me she frowns ;

For winne I, loose I, both procure my grieve,

Cador. Put case you winne, what grieve ?

Arthur. Admit I doe,

What joy ?

Cador. Then may you rule.

Arthur. When I may die.

Cador. To rule is much.

Arthur. Small, if we covet naught.

Cador. Who covets not a crowne ?

Arthur. He that discernes

The swoord aloft.

Cador. That hangeth fast.

Arthur. But by

A haire.

Cador. Right holdes it up.

Arthur. Wrong puls it downe.

Cador. The Commons help the king.

Arthur. They sometimes hurt.

Cador. At least the Peeres.

Arthur. Sield, if allegiance want.

Cador. Yet soveraigntie.

* i. e. reach'd or gave the reins to will.

Arthur. Not if subjection* faile

Cador. Doubt not : the realme is yours.

Arthur. 'Twas mine 'till now.

Cador. And shall be still.

Arthur. If Mordred list.

Cador. Twere well

Your crowne were wonne.

Arthur. Perhaps tis better lost.

Howell. The name of rule should move a princely minde.

Arthur. Trust me, bad things have often glorious names.

Howell. The greatest good that fortune can affoord.

Arthur. A dangerous good, that wisdom would eschue.

Howell. Yet waigh the hearesaie of the olde renowme.
And fame, the wonderer of the former age,
Which still extolls the facts of worthyest wights,
Preferring no deserts before your deeds.

Even she exhorts you to this new attempt,
Which left untryde your winnings be but losse.

Arthur. Small credit will be given of matters past
To Fame, the flatterer of the former age.

Were al beleev'd which antique bruite imports,
Yet wisdom waighes the perill joinde to praise.

Rare is the fame (marke well all ages gone)
Which hath not hurt the house it most enhaun'st.

Besides, fame's but a blast that sounds a while,
And quickly stints, and then is quite forgot.

Looke, whatsoe'r our virtues have atchiev'd
The Chaos vast and greedy time devours.

To day all Europe rings with Arthur's praise:
'Twill be as husht as if I ne'r had beene.

What bootes it then to venture life or limme
For that which needes e'r long we leave or loose?

Cador. Can blinde affection so much bleare the wise,

* The word *subjection* in this place has been pasted over "allegiance."

Or love of gracelesse sonne so witch the sire,
That what concernes the honour of a prince,
With countries good and subjects just request,
Should lightly be contemned by a king?

When Lucius sent but for his tribute due,
You went with thirteen kings to roote him out.
Have Romanes, for requiring but their owne,
Aboad your nine yeares brunts? Shall Mordred scape,
That wrong'd you thus in honour, queene, and realme?

Were this no cause to stirre a king to wrath,
Yet should your conquests late atchiev'd gainst Rome
Inflame your minde with thirst of full revenge.

Arthur. Indeede, continuall warres have chafte our
minde,
And good successe hath bred impatient moods.
Rome puffes us up, and makes us too, too fierce.
There, Brytaines, there we stand, whence Rome did
fall.

Thou, Lucius, mak'st me proude, thou heav'st my
minde;
But what? shall I esteeme a crowne ought else
Then as a gorgeous crest of easeless helme,
Or as some brittel mould of glorious pompe,
Or glittering glasse, which whiles it shines it breakes?
All this a sodaine chaunce may dash, and not
Perhaps with thirteene kings, or in nine yeares:
All may not finde so slowe and lingring fates.

What that my country cryes for due remorse,
And some reliefe for long sustained toyles?
By seas and lands I dayly wrought her wrecke,
And spareless spent her life on every foe.
Eche where my souldiers perisht, whilest I wonne:
Throughout the world my conquest was their spoile.

A faire reward for all their deaths, for all
Their warres abroad, to give them civill warres!
What bootes it them, reserv'd from forreine foiles,
To die at home? what ende of rutheslesse rage?

At least let age and nature, worne to nought,
Provide at length their graves with wished groanes.
Pitty their hoary haires, their feeble fists,

Their withered lims, their strengths consumde in
campe!

Must they still ende their lives amongst the blades?
Rests there no other fate whiles Arthur raignes?

What deeme you me?—A furie fedde with blood,
Or some Ciclopian, borne and bred for braules?
Thinke on the minde that Arthur beares to peace:
Can Arthur please you no where but in warres?

Be witnesse, heavens, how farre 'tis from minde
Therewith to spoile or sacke my native soile.
I cannot yeeld—it brookes not in my breast
To seeke her ruine whom I erst have rulde.
What reliques now so e'r both civill broyles,
And forreine warres have left, let those remaine:
Th'are fewe inough, and Brytaines fall too fast.

THE SECOND SCENE.

An HERAULT from MORDRED.

Howell. Lo, here an Herault sent from Mordred's
campe:

A froward message, if I reede aright.
We mought not stirre his wrath—perhaps this may.
Perswasions cannot move a Brytanies moode,
And yet none sooner stung with present wrong.

Herault. Haile, peereless prince! whiles fortune
would, our king,
Though now bereft of crowne and former rule.
Vouchsafe me leave my message to impart,
No jotte inforst, but as your sonne affords.

If here you stay but three dayes to an ende,
And not forthwith discharge your bands and hoast,
'Tis Mordreds oath, assure your selfe to die.
But if you finde your courage so to serve,
As for to stand to your defence with force,
In Cornewell (if you dare) he'il trye it out.

Arthur. Is this the choyce my sonne doth send his
sire?

And must I die, or trye it if I dare?

To die were ill, thus to be dar'd is worse.
Display my standart forth ! let trumpe and drumme
Call souldiers nere to heare their soveraignes heast.

THE THIRD SCENE.

GAWIN *king of Albania*, ASCHILLUS *king of Denmark*,
KING OF NORWAY. *A number of Souldiers.*

Arthur. O friends, and fellowes of my weriest toyles,
Which have borne out with me so many brunts,
And desperate stormes of warres and brainsicke Mars !
Loe, now the hundreth month wherein we winne.

Hath all the bloud we spent on forreine coasts,
'The wounds and deaths and winters boad abroad,
Deserved thus to be disgrac'd at home ?

All Brytaine rings of warres : no towne nor fiede
But swarmes with armed troupes : the mustering traines
Stop up the streetes : no lesse a tumult's raisde,
Then when Hengistus fell, and Horsus fierce
With treacherous truce did overrunne the realme.

Each corner threateneth death : both farre and nere
Is Arthur vext. What if my force had faild
And standarde falne, and ensignes all beene torne,
And Roman troupes pursude me at the heeles,
With lucklesse warres assaid in forreine soiles ?

Now that our fortune heaves us up thus hie,
And heavens themselves renewe our olde renowme,
Must we be darde ? Nay, let that Princocke come,
That knowes not yet himselfe, nor Arthur's force ;
That n'er yet waged warres ; that's yet to learne
To give the charge : yea, let that Princocke come,
With sodaine souldiers pamper'd up in peace,
And gowned troupes and wantons worne with ease ;
With sluggish Saxons crewe, and Irish kernes,
And Scottish aide, and false redshanked Picts,
Whose slaughters yet must teach their former foyle.

They shall perceave with sorrow e'r they part,
When all their toyles be tolde, that nothing workes
So great a waste and ruine in this age,

As doe my warres. O Mordred, blessed sonne!
No doubt these market mates, so highly hier'd,
Must be the stay of thy usurped state.

And least my head, inclining now to yeares,
Should joy the rest which yet it never reapt,
The traitor Gilla, train'd in treacherous jarres,
Is chiefe in armes to reave me of my realme.

What corner, (ah) for all my warres, shall shrowde
My bloodless age? what seate for due deserts?
What towne or field for auncient souldiers rest?
What house? what roofe? what walls for weried lims?
Stretch out againe, stretch out your conquering
hands!

Still we must use the force so often usde.
To those that will pursue a wrong with wreke
He giveth all, that once denies the right.

Thou soile, which erst Diana did ordaine
The certaine seate and boure of wandring Brute:
Thou realme, which ay I reverence as my saint,
Thou stately Brytaine, th' ancient tipe of Troy,
Beare with my forced wrongs! I am not he,
That willing would impeach thy peace with warres!

Lo here, both farre and wide I conqueror stand:
Arthur, each where thine owne, thy liedge, thy king:
Condemne not mine attempts; he, onely he,
Is sole in fault that makes me thus thy foe.

Here I renounce all leagues and treats of truce:
Thou, fortune, henceforth art my garde and guide!
Hence peace! on warres run fates: let Mars be judge,
I erst did trust to right, but now to rage.

Goe, tell the boy that Arthur feares no brags:
In vaine he seekes to brave it with his sire.
I come, (Mordred) I come, but to thy paine.
Yea, tell the boy his angry father comes
To teach a novist both to die and dare. [*Herault exit.*

Howell. If we without offence (O greatest guide
Of Brytish name) may poure our just complaints,
We most mislike that your too milde a moode
Hath thus withheld our hands and swords from strokes.
For what? were we behinde in any helpe?

Or without cause did you misdoubt our force,
Or truth so often tried with good successe?

Go to : conduct your army to the fielde ;
Place man to man, oppose us to our foes :
As much we neede to worke, as wish your weale.

Cador. Seemes it so sowre to winne by civill warres ?
Were it to goare with pike my father's braest ;
Were it to rive and cleave my brother's head ;
Were it to teare peacemeale my dearest childe,
I would inforce my grudging handes to helpe.

I cannot terme that place my native soyle,
Whereto your trumpets send their warlike sounds.
If case requir'd to batter downe the towres
Of any towne that Arthur would destroy,
Yea, wer't of Brytaines selfe, which most I rede,
Her bulwarkes, fortresse, rampiers, walles and fence,
These armes should reare the rams to runne them downe.

Wherefore, ye princes, and the rest, my mates,
If what I have averd in all your names,
Be likewise such as stands to your content,
Let all your yeas avow my promise true.

Souldiers. Yea, yea, &c.

Aschillus. Wherein, renowned king, my selfe or
mine,
My life, my kingdome, and all Denmarke powre,
May serve your turne, account them all your owne.

King of Norway. And whatso'er my force, or Nor-
waie aide,
May helpe in your attempts, I vow it here.

Gawin. As heretofore I alwayes servde your heast,
So let this daie be judge of Gawin's trust.
Either my brother Mordred dies the death
By mine assault, or I at least by his.

Arthur. Since thus (my faithfull mates) with vowes
alike,
And equall love to Arthur's cause you joyne,
In common care to wreake my private wrongs,
Lift up your ensignes efts, stretch out your strengths ;
Pursue your fates ; performe your hopes to Mars.
Loe, here the last and outmost worke for blades !

This is the time that all our valour craves :
 This time by due desert restores againe
 Our goods, our lands, our lives, our weale and all.
 This time declares by fates whose cause is best ;
 This, this condemnes the vanquisht side of guilt.

Wherefore, if for my sake you skorne your selves,
 And spare no sword not fire in my defence,
 Then, whiles my censure justifies your cause,
 Fight, fight amaine, and cleare your blades from
 crime :

The judge once changde, no warres are free from
 guilt.

The better cause gives us the greater hope
 Of prosperous warres ; wherein, if once I hap
 To spie the wonted signes, that never failde
 Their guide, your threatening looks, your fire eyes,
 And bustling bodies prest to present spoile,
 The field is wonne ! Even then, me thinkes, I see
 The wonted wasts and scattered heads of foes,
 The Irish carcas kickt, and Picts opprest,
 And Saxons slaine to swim in streames of bloud.
 I quake with hope. I can assure you all,
 We never had a greater match in hand.

March on ! Delaie no fates whiles fortune fawnes :
 The greatest praise of warres consists in speed.

[*Exeunt Reges et Cohors.*]

THE FOURTH SCENE.

CADOR, ARTHUR.

Cador. Since thus (victorious king) your peeres,
 allies,
 Your lords, and all your powres be ready prest,
 For good, for bad, for whatsoe'r shall hap,
 To spend both limme and life in your defence,
 Cast of all doubts and rest your selfe on Mars :
 A hopelesse feare forbids a happy fate.

Arthur. In sooth (good Cador) so our fortune fares,
 As needes we must returne to woonted force.
 To warres we must ; but such unbappy warres,

As leave no hope for right or wrong to scape.

~~My selfe foresees the fate; it cannot fall~~
~~Without our dearest blood: much may the minde~~
~~Of pensive sire presage, whose sonne so sinnes.~~
 All truth, all trust, all blood, all bands be broke!
 The seedes are sowne that spring to future spoyle.
 My sonne, my nephew, yea, each side my selfe,
 Nearer then all (woe's me) too nere, my foe!

Well; 'tis my plague for life so lowdly ledde.
~~The price of guilt is still a heavier guilt;~~
~~For were it light, that ev'n by birth my selfe~~
~~Was bad, I made my sister bad: nay, were~~
~~that also light, I have begot as bad,~~
~~Yea worse, an heire assignde to all our sinnes.~~

Such was his birth: what base, what vulgar vice,
 Could once be lookt for of so noble blood?
 The deeper guilt descends, the more it rootes:
 The younger imps effect the huger crimes. [Exeunt.]

CHORUS.

1.

When many men assent to civill warres
 And yeelde a suffradge to inforce the fates,
 No man bethinkes him of his owne mishappe,
 But turns that lucke unto an other's share.
 Whereas if feare did first forewarne ech foyle,
 Such love to fight would breed no Brytains bane.

And better were still to preserve our peace,
 Then thus to vent for peace through waging warres.
 What follie to forgoe such certayne happes,
 And in their steede to feede uncertayne hopes!

Such hopes as oft have puft up many a realme,
 Till crosse successe hath prest it downe as deepe:
 Whiles blind affection fetcht from private cause
 Misguiding wit hath maskt in wisdom's vaile,
 Pretending what in purpose it abhorr'd.

humane five
mid
the
peace
the other
of a
Wick's
high

2.

Peace hath three foes incamped in our breasts ;
Ambition, wrath, and envy ; which subdude,
We should not faile to finde eternall peace.

'Tis in our powre to joy it all at will,
And fewe there be, but if they will, they may :
But yet even those, who like the name of peace,
Through fond desire repine at peace it selfe,

Betweene the hope whereof, and it it selfe,
A thousand things may fall that further warres.
The very speech sometimes, and treats of truce,
Is slasht and cut a sunder with the sword.

Nor sield the name of peace doth edge our mindes,
And sharpeneth on our furie till we fight ;
So that the mention made of love and rest
Is oft a whetstone to our hate and rage.

3.

Lo, here the end that kingly pompe imparts,
The quiet rest that princely pallace plights !
Care upon care, and every day a newe
Fresh rysing tempest tires the tossed mindes.

Who strives to stand in pompe of princely port,
On guiddy top and culme of slippery court,
Findes oft a heavy fate ; whiles too much knowne
To all, he falles unknowne unto himselfe.*

Let who so else that list affect the name,
But let me seeme a potentate to none :
My slender barke shall creepe† anenst the shoare,
And shunne the windes that sweepe the waltering
waves.

Prowde fortune over slippest‡ the saffest roades,

• *Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi.*

Sen. Thyestes, A. II. Chor.

† In the original misprinted *cacepe*.

‡ *overhippes* in the original.

And seekes amidst the surging seas those keeles
Whose lofty tops and tacklings touch the cloudes.

4.

O base, yet happy boores ! O giftes of Gods
Scant yet perceav'd ! when poudred ermine roabes
With secrete sighes, mistrusting their extreames,
In bailefull breast forecast their foultring fates,
And stirre and strive and storne, and all in vaine ;
Behold the peasant poore with tattered coate,
Whose eyes a meaner fortune feedes with sleepe,
How safe and sound the carelesse snudge doth snore.

Low roofed lurkes the house of slender hap,
Costlesse, not gay without, scant cleane within ;
Yet safe, and oftner shroudes the hoary haire,
Then haughty turrets, rearde with curious art,
To harbour heads that wield the golden crest.

With endlesse carke in glorious courts and townes
The troubled hopes, and trembling fearés doe dwell.

The Argument of the fourth Act.

1. In the first scene Gildas and Conan conferre of the state of Brytaine.

2. In the second scene Nuntius maketh report of the whole battaile, with the death of Mordred, and Arthurs and Cadors deadly wound.

3. In the third scene Gildas and Conan lament the infortunate state of the countrie.

The Argument and manner of the fourth dumb shewe.

During the musicke appointed after the third act there came in a Lady courtly attyred with a counterfaite childe in her armes who walked softly on the stage. From an other place there came a king crowned, who likewise walked on an other part of the stage. From a thirde place there came four souldiers all armed, who spying this Lady and King, upon a sodaine pursued the Lady from whom they violently tooke her childe

and flung it against the walles : she in mournefull sort wringing her hands passed her way. Then in like manner they sette on the king, tearing his crowne from his head, and casting it in pieces under feete, drave him by force away ; and so passed themselves over the stage. By this was meant the fruit of warre, which spareth neither man, woman, nor childe, with the ende of Mordred's usurped crowne.

THE FOURTH ACT AND FIRST SCENE.

GILDAS, CONAN.

Gildas. Lord Conan, though I know how hard a thing

It is for mindes trainde up in princely thrones,
To heare of ought against their humor's course,
Yet, sithence who forbiddeth not offence,
If well he may, is cause of such offence,
I could have wisht (and blame me not, my lord)
Your place and countnance both with sonne and sire
Had more prevailde on either side, then thus
T'have left a crowne in danger for a crowne
Through civill warres, our countries woonted woe :
Whereby the kingdom's wound still festring deepe,
Sucks up the mischiefes humor to the hart.

The staggering state of Brytaines troubled braines,
Hedsicke, and sore incumbred in her crowne,
With guiddy steps runnes on a headlong race.
Whereto this tempest tends, or where this storme
Will breake who knowes ? but gods avert the worst !

Conan. Now surely (Gildas) as my duety stood
Indifferent for the best to sonne and sire,
So (I protest) since these occasions grewe,
That in the depth of my desire to please,
I more esteemde what honest faith requir'd
In matters meete for their estates and place,
Than how to feede each fond affection, prone
To bad effects, whence their disgrace mought growe.

And as for Mordred's desperate and disloyall plots,

They had been none, or fewer at the least,
Had I prevail'd ; which Arthur knowes right well.

But even as counters go sometimes for one,
Sometimes for'thousands more, sometimes for none,
So men in greatest countnance with their king
Can worke by fit perswasion sometimes much ;
But sometimes lesse, and sometimes nought at all.

Gildas. Well, we that have not spent our time in
warres,

But bent our course at peace and countries weale,
May rather now expect what strange event,
And chaunce insues of these so rare attempts,
Then enter to discourse upon their cause,
And erre as wide in wordes, as they in deedes.

Conan. And lo, to satisfie your wish therein,
Where comes a souldier sweating from the camps.

THE SECOND SCENE.

NUNCIUS.

Nuncius. Thou, echo shrill, that hauntst the hollow
hilles

Leave off that woont to snatch the latter word.
Howle on a whole discourse of our distresse :
Clippe off no clause ; sound out a perfect sense.

Gildas. What fresh mishap (alas) what newe annoy
Removes our pensive mindes from wonted woes,
And yet requires a newe lamenting moode,
Declare ! we joy to handle all our harmes :
Our many griefes have taught us still to mourne.

Nuncius. But (ah) my tongue denies my speech his
aide :

Great force doth drive it forth ; a greater keepes
It in. I rue, surprisde with woontlesse woes.

Conan. Speake on what grieve so e'r our fates afford.

Nuncius. Small griefes can speake, the great asto-
nisht stand.*

* *Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*

The grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er fraught heart and bids it break.

Macbeth, A. IV. sc. 3.

Their withered lims, their strengths consumde in
campe!

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campe:

A froward message, if I reede aright.
We mought not stirre his wrath—perhaps this may.
Perswasions cannot move a Brytanies moode,
And yet none sooner stung with present wrong.

Herault. Haile, peereless prince! whiles fortune
would, our king,
Though now bereft of crowne and former rule.
Vouchsafe me leave my message to impart,
No jotte inforst, but as your sonne affords.

If here you stay but three dayes to an ende,
And not forthwith discharge your bands and hoast,
'Tis Mordreds oath, assure your selfe to die.
But if you finde your courage so to serve,
As for to stand to your defence with force,
In Cornewell (if you dare) he'il trye it out.

Arthur. Is this the choyce my sonne doth send his
sire?

And must I die, or trye it if I dare?

To die were ill, thus to be dar'd is worse.
Display my standart forth ! let trumpe and drumme
Call souldiers nere to heare their soveraignes heast.

THE THIRD SCENE.

GAWIN *king of Albania*, ASCHILLUS *king of Denmark*,
KING OF NORWAY. *A number of Souldiers.*

Arthur. O friends, and fellowes of my weriest toyles,
Which have borne out with me so many brunts,
And desperate stormes of warres and brainsicke Mars !
Loe, now the hundreth month wherein we winne.

Hath all the bloud we spent on forreine coasts,
The wounds and deaths and winters boad abroad,
Deserved thus to be disgrac'd at home ?

All Brytaine rings of warres : no towne nor fiede
But swarmes with armed troupes : the mustering traines
Stop up the streetes : no lesse a tumult's raisde,
Then when Hengistus fell, and Horsus fierce
With treacherous truce did overunne the realme.

Each corner threateneth death : both farre and nere
Is Arthur vext. What if my force had faild
And standarde falne, and ensignes all beene torne,
And Roman troupes pursude me at the heeles,
With lucklesse warres assaid in forreine soiles ?

Now that our fortune heaves us up thus hie,
And heavens themselves renewe our olde renowme,
Must we be darde ? Nay, let that Princke come,
That knowes not yet himselfe, nor Arthur's force ;
That n'er yet waged warres ; that's yet to learne
To give the charge : yea, let that Princke come,
With sodaine souldiers pamper'd up in peace,
And gowned troupes and wantons worne with ease ;
With sluggish Saxons crewe, and Irish kernes,
And Scottish aide, and false redshanked Picts,
Whose slaughters yet must teach their former foyle.

They shall perceave with sorrow e'r they part,
When all their toyles be tolde, that nothing workes
So great a waste and ruine in this age,

As doe my warres. O Mordred, blessed sonne !
No doubt these market mates, so highly hier'd,
Must be the stay of thy usurped state.

And least my head, inclining now to yeares,
Should joy the rest which yet it never reapt,
The traitor Gilla, train'd in treacherous jarres,
Is chiefe in armes to reave me of my realme.

What corner, (ah) for all my warres, shall shrowde
My bloodless age ? what seate for due deserts ?
What towne or field for auncient souldiers rest ?
What house ? what roofe ? what walls for weried lims ?

Stretch out againe, stretch out your conquering
hands !

Still we must use the force so often usde.
To those that will pursue a wrong with wreke
He giveth all, that once denies the right.

Thou soile, which erst Diana did ordaine
The certaine seate and boure of wandring Brute :
Thou realme, which ay I reverence as my saint,
Thou stately Brytaine, th' ancient tipe of Troy,
Beare with my forced wrongs ! I am not he,
That willing would impeach thy peace with warres !

Lo here, both farre and wide I conqueror stand :
Arthur, each where thine owne, thy liedge, thy king :
Condemne not mine attempts ; he, onely he,
Is sole in fault that makes me thus thy foe.

Here I renounce all leagues and treats of truce :
Thou, fortune, henceforth art my garde and guide !
Hence peace ! on warres run fates : let Mars be judge,
I erst did trust to right, but now to rage.

Goe, tell the boy that Arthur feares no brags :
In vaine he seekes to brave it with his sire.
I come, (Mordred) I come, but to thy paine.
Yea, tell the boy his angry father comes
To teach a novist both to die and dare. [*Herault exit.*

Howell. If we without offence (O greatest guide
Of Brytish name) may poure our just complaints,
We most mislike that your too milde a moode
Hath thus withheld our hands and swords from strokes.
For what ? were we behinde in any helpe ?

Or without cause did you misdoubt our force,
Or truth so often tried with good successe?

Go to : conduct your army to the felde ;
Place man to man, oppose us to our foes :
As much we neede to worke, as wish your weale.

Cador. Seemes it so sowre to winne by civill warres?
Were it to goare with pike my father's braest ;
Were it to rive and cleave my brother's head ;
Were it to teare peacemeale my dearest childe,
I would inforce my grudging handes to helpe.

I cannot terme that place my native soyle,
Whereto your trumpets send their warlike sounds.
If case requir'd to batter downe the towres
Of any towne that Arthur would destroy,
Yea, wer't of Brytaines selfe, which most I rede,
Her bulwarkes, fortresse, rampiers, walles and fence,
These armes should reare the rams to runne them downe.

Wherefore, ye princes, and the rest, my mates,
If what I have averd in all your names,
Be likewise such as stands to your content,
Let all your yeas avow my promise true.

Souldiers. Yea, yea, &c.

Aschillus. Wherein, renowned king, my selfe or
mine,
My life, my kingdome, and all Denmarke powre,
May serve your turne, account them all your owne.

King of Norway. And whatso'er my force, or Nor-
waie aide,
May helpe in your attempts, I vow it here.

Gawin. As heretofore I alwayes servde your heast,
So let this daie be judge of Gawin's trust.
Either my brother Mordred dies the death
By mine assault, or I at least by his.

Arthur. Since thus (my faithfull mates) with vowes
alike,
And equall love to Arthur's cause you joyne,
In common care to wreake my private wrongs,
Lift up your ensignes efts, stretch out your strengths ;
Pursue your fates ; performe your hopes to Mars.
Loe, here the last and outmost worke for blades !

This is the time that all our valour craves :
 This time by due desert restores againe
 Our goods, our lands, our lives, our weale and all.
 This time declares by fates whose cause is best ;
 This, this condemnes the vanquisht side of guilt.

Wherefore, if for my sake you skorne your selves,
 And spare no sword not fire in my defence,
 Then, whiles my censure justifies your cause,
 Fight, fight amaine, and cleare your blades from
 crime :

The judge once changde, no warres are free from
 guilt.

The better cause gives us the greater hope
 Of prosperous warres ; wherein, if once I hap
 To spie the wonted signes, that never failde
 Their guide, your threatening looks, your fire eyes,
 And bustling bodies prest to present spoile,
 The field is wonne ! Even then, me thinkes, I see
 The wonted wasts and scattered heads of foes,
 The Irish carcas kickt, and Picts opprest,
 And Saxons slaine to swim in streames of bloud.
 I quake with hope. I can assure you all,
 We never had a greater match in hand.

March on ! Delaie no fates whiles fortune fawnes :
 The greatest praise of warres consists in speed.

[*Exeunt Reges et Cohors.*]

THE FOURTH SCENE.

CADOR, ARTHUR.

Cador. Since thus (victorious king) your peeres,
 allies,
 Your lords, and all your powres be ready prest,
 For good, for bad, for whatsoe'r shall hap,
 To spend both limme and life in your defence,
 Cast of all doubts and rest your selfe on Mars :
 A hopelesse feare forbids a happy fate.

Arthur. In sooth (good Cador) so our fortune fares,
 As needes we must returne to woonted force.
 To warres we must ; but such unbappy warres,

As leave no hope for right or wrong to scape.

~~My selfe foresees the fate; it cannot fall~~
~~Without our dearest blood:~~ much may the minde
 Of pensive sire presage, whose sonne so sinnes.
 All truth, all trust, all blood, all bands be broke!
 The seedes are sowne that spring to future spoyle.
 My sonne, my nephew, yea, each side my selfe,
 Nerer then all (woe's me) too nere, my foe!

Well; 'tis my plague for life so lowdly ledde.
~~The price of guilt is still a heavier guilt;~~
~~For were it light, that ev'n by birth my selfe~~
~~Was bad, I made my sister bad: nay, were~~
~~That also light, I have begot as bad,~~
~~Yea worse, an heire assignde to all our sinnes.~~

Such was his birth: what base, what vulgar vice,
 Could once be lookt for of so noble blood?
 The deeper guilt descends, the more it rootes:
 The younger imps effect the huger crimes. [Exeunt.]

CHORUS.

1.

When many men assent to civill warres
 And yeelde a suffradge to inforce the fates,
 No man bethinkes him of his owne mishappe,
 But turns that lucke unto an other's share.
 Whereas if feare did first forewarne ech foyle,
 Such love to fight would breed no Brytains bane.

And better were still to preserve our peace,
 Then thus to vent for peace through waging warres.
 What follie to forgoe such certayne happes,
 And in their steede to feede uncertayne hopes!

Such hopes as oft have puft up many a realme,
 Till crosse successe hath prest it downe as deepe:
 Whiles blind affection fetcht from private cause
 Misguiding wit hath maskt in wisdom's vaile,
 Pretending what in purpose it abhorr'd.

2.

Peace hath three foes incamped in our breasts;
Ambition, wrath, and envy; which subdude,
We should not faile to finde eternall peace.

'Tis in our powre to joy it all at will,
And fewe there be, but if they will, they may:
But yet even those, who like the name of peace,
Through fond desire repine at peace it selfe,
 Betweene the hope whereof, and it it selfe,
A thousand things may fall that further warres.
The very speech sometimes, and treats of truce,
Is slasht and cut a sunder with the sword.

Nor sield the name of peace doth edge our mindes,
And sharpeneth on our furie till we fight;
So that the mention made of love and rest
Is oft a whetstone to our hate and rage.

3.

Lo, here the end that kingly pompe imparts,
The quiet rest that princely pallace plights!
Care upon care, and every day a newe
Fresh rysing tempest tires the tossed mindes.

Who strives to stand in pompe of princely port,
On guiddy top and culme of slippery court,
Findes oft a heavy fate; whiles too much knowne
To all, he falles unknowne unto himselfe.*

Let who so else that list affect the name,
But let me seeme a potentate to none:
My slender barke shall creepe† anenst the shoare,
And shunne the windes that sweepe the waltering
 waves.

Prowde fortune over slippest‡ the saffest roades,

• *Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi.*

Sen. Thyestes, A. II. Chor.

† In the original misprinted *creepe*.

‡ *overhippes* in the original.

And seekes amidst the surging seas those keeles
Whose lofty tops and tacklings touch the cloudes.

4.

O base, yet happy boores ! O giftes of Gods
Scant yet perceav'd ! when poudred ermine roabes
With secrete sighes, mistrusting their extreames,
In bailefull breast forecast their foultring fates,
And stirre and strive and storne, and all in vaine ;
Behold the peasant poore with tattered coate,
Whose eyes a meaner fortune feedes with sleepe,
How safe and sound the carelesse snudge doth snore.

Low roofed lurkes the house of slender hap,
Costlesse, not gay without, scant cleane within ;
Yet safe, and oftner shroudes the hoary haire,
Then haughty turrets, rearde with curious art,
To harbour heads that wield the golden crest.

With endlesse carke in glorious courts and townes
The troubled hopes, and trembling fearés doe dwell.

The Argument of the fourth Act.

1. In the first scene Gildas and Conan conferre of the state of Brytaine.

2. In the second scene Nuntius maketh report of the whole battaile, with the death of Mordred, and Arthurs and Cadors deadly wound.

3. In the third scene Gildas and Conan lament the infortunate state of the countrie.

The Argument and manner of the fourth dumb shewe.

During the musicke appointed after the third act there came in a Lady courtly attyred with a counterfaite childe in her armes who walked softly on the stage. From an other place there came a king crowned, who likewise walked on an other part of the stage. From a thirde place there came four souldiers all armed, who spying this Lady and King, upon a sodaine pursued the Lady from whom they violently tooke her childe

and flung it against the walles : she in mournefull sort wringing her hands passed her way. Then in like manner they sette on the king, tearing his crowne from his head, and casting it in pieces under feete, drave him by force away ; and so passed themselves over the stage. By this was meant the fruit of warre, which spareth neither man, woman, nor childe, with the ende of Mordred's usurped crowne.

THE FOURTH ACT AND FIRST SCENE.

GILDAS, CONAN.

Gildas. Lord Conan, though I know how hard a thing

It is for mindes trainde up in princely thrones,
To heare of ought against their humor's course,
Yet, sithence who forbiddeth not offence,
If well he may, is cause of such offence,
I could have wisht (and blame me not, my lord)
Your place and countnance both with sonne and sire
Had more prevailde on either side, then thus
T'have left a crowne in danger for a crowne
Through civill warres, our countries woonted woe :
Whereby the kingdom's wound still festring deepe,
Sucks up the mischief's humor to the hart.

The staggering state of Brytaines troubled braines,
Hedsicke, and sore incumbred in her crowne,
With guiddy steps runnes on a headlong race.
Whereto this tempest tends, or where this storme
Will breake who knowes ? but gods avert the worst !

Conan. Now surely (Gildas) as my duety stood
Indifferent for the best to sonne and sire,
So (I protest) since these occasions grewe,
That in the depth of my desire to please,
I more esteemde what honest faith requir'd
In matters meete for their estates and place,
Than how to feede each fond affection, prone
To bad effects, whence their disgrace mought growe.

And as for Mordred's desperate and disloyall plots,

They had been none, or fewer at the least,
Had I prevail'd ; which Arthur knowes right well.

But even as counters go sometimes for one,
Sometimes for 'thousands more, sometimes for none,
So men in greatest countnance with their king
Can worke by fit perswasion sometimes much ;
But sometimes lesse, and sometimes nought at all.

Gildas. Well, we that have not spent our time in
warres,

But bent our course at peace and countries weale,
May rather now expect what strange event,
And chaunce insues of these so rare attempts,
Then enter to discourse upon their cause,
And erre as wide in wordes, as they in deedes.

Conan. And lo, to satisfie your wish therein,
Where comes a souldier sweating from the camps.

THE SECOND SCENE.

NUNCIUS.

Nuncius. Thou, echo shrill, that hauntst the hollow
hilles

Leave off that woont to snatch the latter word.
Howle on a whole discourse of our distresse :
Clippe off no clause ; sound out a perfect sense.

Gildas. What fresh mishap (alas) what newe annoy
Removes our pensive mindes from wonted woes,
And yet requires a newe lamenting moode,
Declare ! we joy to handle all our harmes :
Our many griefes have taught us still to mourne.

Nuncius. But (ah) my tongue denies my speech his
aide :

Great force doth drive it forth ; a greater keepes
It in. I rue, surprisde with woontlesse woes.

Conan. Speake on what grieve so e'r our fates afford.

Nuncius. Small griefes can speake, the great asto-
nisht stand.*

* *Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*

The grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er fraught heart and bids it break.

Macbeth, A. IV. sc. 3.

Their withered lims, their strengths consumde in
campe !

Must they still ende their lives amongst the blades ?
Rests there no other fate whiles Arthur raignes ?

What deeme you me ?—A furie fedde with blood,
Or some Ciclopian, borne and bred for braules ?
Thinke on the minde that Arthur beares to peace :
Can Arthur please you no where but in warres ?

Be witnesse, heavens, how farre 'tis from minde
Therewith to spoile or sacke my native soile.
I cannot yeeld—it brookes not in my breast
To seeke her ruine whom I erst have rulde.
What reliques now so e'r both civill broyles,
And forreine warres have left, let those remaine :
Th'are fewe inough, and Brytaines fall too fast.

THE SECOND SCENE.

An HERAULT from MORDRED.

Howell. Lo, here an Herault sent from Mordred's
campe :

A froward message, if I reede aright.
We mought not stirre his wrath—perhaps this may.
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 And in their steede to feede uncertayne hopes!

Such hopes as oft have puft up many a realme,
 Till crosse successe hath prest it downe as deepe:
 Whiles blind affection fetcht from private cause
 Misguiding wit hath maskt in wisdom's vaile,
 Pretending what in purpose it abhorr'd.

Handwritten notes:
 Narrative
 and
 the
 peace
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 the
 of a
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 might
 in

2.

Peace hath three foes incamped in our breasts ;
Ambition, wrath, and envy ; which subdude,
We should not faile to finde eternall peace.

'Tis in our powre to joy it all at will,
And fewe there be, but if they will, they may :
But yet even those, who like the name of peace,
Through fond desire repine at peace it selfe,
Betweene the hope whereof, and it it selfe,
A thousand things may fall that further warres.
The very speech sometimes, and treats of truce,
Is slasht and cut a sunder with the sword.

Nor sield the name of peace doth edge our mindes,
And sharpeneth on our furie till we fight ;
So that the mention made of love and rest
Is oft a whetstone to our hate and rage.

3.

Lo, here the end that kingly pompe imparts,
The quiet rest that princely pallace plights !
Care upon care, and every day a newe
Fresh rysing tempest tires the tossed mindes.

Who strives to stand in pompe of princely port,
On guiddy top and culme of slippery court,
Findes oft a heavy fate ; whiles too much knowne
To all, he falles unknowne unto himselfe.*

Let who so else that list affect the name,
But let me seeme a potentate to none :
My slender barke shall creepe† anenst the shoare,
And shunne the windes that sweepe the waltering
waves.

Prowde fortune over slippest‡ the saffest roades,

• *Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi.*

Sen. Thyestes, A. II. Chor.

† In the original misprinted *cesepe*.

‡ *overhippes* in the original.

And seekes amidst the surging seas those keeles
Whose lofty tops and tacklings touch the cloudes.

4.

O base, yet happy boores ! O giftes of Gods
Scant yet perceav'd ! when poudred ermine roabes
With secrete sighes, mistrusting their extreames,
In bailefull breast forecast their foultring fates,
And stirre and strive and storne, and all in vaine ;
Behold the peasant poore with tattered coate,
Whose eyes a meaner fortune feedes with sleepe,
How safe and sound the carelesse snudge doth snore.

Low roofed lurkes the house of slender hap,
Costlesse, not gay without, scant cleane within ;
Yet safe, and oftner shroudes the hoary haire,
Then haughty turrets, rearde with curious art,
To harbour heads that wield the golden crest.

With endlesse carke in glorious courts and townes
The troubled hopes, and trembling fearés doe dwell.

The Argument of the fourth Act.

1. In the first scene Gildas and Conan conferre of the state of Brytaine.

2. In the second scene Nuntius maketh report of the whole battaile, with the death of Mordred, and Arthurs and Cadors deadly wound.

3. In the third scene Gildas and Conan lament the infortunate state of the countrie.

The Argument and manner of the fourth dumb shewe.

During the musicke appointed after the third act there came in a Lady courtly attyred with a counterfaite childe in her armes who walked softly on the stage. From an other place there came a king crowned, who likewise walked on an other part of the stage. From a thirde place there came four souldiers all armed, who spying this Lady and King, upon a sodaine pursued the Lady from whom they violently tooke her childe

and flung it against the walles : she in mournefull sort wringing her hands passed her way. Then in like manner they sette on the king, tearing his crowne from his head, and casting it in pieces under feete, drave him by force away ; and so passed themselves over the stage. By this was meant the fruit of warre, which spareth neither man, woman, nor childe, with the ende of Mordred's usurped crowne.

THE FOURTH ACT AND FIRST SCENE.

GILDAS, CONAN.

Gildas. Lord Conan, though I know how hard a thing

It is for mindes trainde up in princely thrones,
To heare of ought against their humor's course,
Yet, sithence who forbiddeth not offence,
If well he may, is cause of such offence,
I could have wisht (and blame me not, my lord)
Your place and countnance both with sonne and sire
Had more prevailde on either side, then thus
T'have left a crowne in danger for a crowne
Through civill warres, our countries woonted woe :
Whereby the kingdom's wound still festring deepe,
Sucks up the mischief's humor to the hart.

The staggering state of Brytaines troubled braines,
Head sicke, and sore incumbred in her crowne,
With guiddy steps runnes on a headlong race.
Whereto this tempest tends, or where this storme
Will breake who knowes ? but gods avert the worst !

Conan. Now surely (Gildas) as my duety stood
Indifferent for the best to sonne and sire,
So (I protest) since these occasions grewe,
That in the depth of my desire to please,
I more esteemde what honest faith requir'd
In matters meete for their estates and place,
Than how to feede each fond affection, prone
To bad effects, whence their disgrace mought growe.
And as for Mordred's desperate and disloyall plots,

They had been none, or fewer at the least,
Had I prevail'd ; which Arthur knowes right well.

But even as counters go sometimes for one,
Sometimes for 'thousands more, sometimes for none,
So men in greatest countnance with their king
Can worke by fit perswasion sometimes much ;
But sometimes lesse, and sometimes nought at all.

Gildas. Well, we that have not spent our time in
warres,
But bent our course at peace and countries weale,
May rather now expect what strange event,
And chaunce insues of these so rare attempts,
Then enter to discourse upon their cause,
And erre as wide in wordes, as they in deedes.
Conan. And lo, to satisfie your wish therein,
Where comes a souldier sweating from the camps.

THE SECOND SCENE.

NUNCIUS.

Nuncius. Thou, echo shrill, that hauntst the hollow
hilles
Leave off that woont to snatch the latter word.
Howle on a whole discourse of our distresse :
Clippe off no clause ; sound out a perfect sense.

Gildas. What fresh mishap (alas) what newe annoy
Removes our pensive mindes from wonted woes,
And yet requires a newe lamenting moode,
Declare ! we joy to handle all our harmes :
Our many griefes have taught us still to mourne.

Nuncius. But (ah) my tongue denies my speech his
aide :
Great force doth drive it forth ; a greater keepes
It in. I rue, surprisde with woontlesse woes.

Conan. Speake on what grieve so e'r our fates afford.

Nuncius. Small griefes can speake, the great asto-
nisht stand.*

* *Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*

The grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er fraught heart and bids it break.

Macbeth, A. IV. sc. 2.

Gildas. What greater sinnes could hap, then what
be past?

What mischiefes could be meant, more then were
wrought?

Nuncius. And thinke you therse to be an end to
sinnes?

No; crime proceedes: those made but one degree.

What mischiefes erst were done terme sacred deedes:

Call nothing sinne but what hath since insu'd.

A greater grieve requires your teares. Behold

These fresh annoyas: your last mishaps be stale.

Conan. Tell on (my friend) suspend our mindes no
more.

Hath Arthur lost? hath Mordred woonne the field?

Nuncius. O, nothing lesse! would, gods, it were
but so!

Arthur hath woonne, but we have lost the field.

The field? Nay, all the realme and Brytaines bounds.

Gildas. How so? If Arthur wonne, what could we
loose?

You speake in cloudes, and cast perplexed wordes.

Unfolde at large, and sort our sorrowes out.

Nuncius. Then list a while: this instant shall un-
wrappe

Those acts, those warres, those hard events, that all

The future age shall ev'r have cause to curse.

Now that the time drewe on when both the camps

Should meet in Cornwell fields, th' appointed place,

The recklesse troupes, whom fates forbad to live

Till noone or night, did storme and rave for warres.

They swarmde about their guydes, and clustring cald

For signes to fight; and fierce with vproares fell,

They onwards hayld the hasting howres of death.

A direfull frenzie rose: ech man his owne

And publike fates all heedelesse headlong flung.

On Mordreds side were sixtie thousande men;

Some borrowed powres, some Brytans bred at home.

The Saxons, Irish, Normans, Pictes and Scottes

Were first in place: the Brytanes followed last.

On Arthurs side there were as manie more:

Islandians, Gothes, Norvegians, Albanes, Danes,
Were forraine aides which Arthur brought from
Fraunce;

A trusty troupe and tryed at many a trench.

That now the day was come, wherein our state
For aye should fall, whenceforth might men inquire
What Brytaine was, these warres thus neere bewraide.
Nor could the heavens no longer hide these harmes,
But by prodigious signes portende our plagues.

For lo, er both the campes encountering coapt,
The skies and poles opposed themselves with stormes:
Both East and West with tempestes darke were dim'd
And showres of hayle and rayne outragious powr'd.
The heavens were rent, ech side the lightnings flash'd,
And clowdes with hideous clappes did thundering roare.

The armies, all agast, did senselesse stand,
Mistrusting much both force and foes and fates;
'Twas harde to say which of the two appal'd
Them most, the monstrous ayre or too much feare.

When Arthur spide his souldiers thus amaz'd,
And hope extinct, and deadly dreade drawne on;
My mates (quoth he) the gods doe skowre the skies,
The fates contende to worke some straunge event,
And fortune seeks by stormes in heavens and earth
What pagions* she may play for my behoofe:
Of whom she knowes she then deserves not well,
When lingring ought she comes not at the first.

Thus saide, rejoycing at his dauntlesse minde,
They all revivde and former feare recoylde.

By that the light of Titan's troubled beames
Had pearceing scattered downe the drowping fogges,
And greeted both the campes with mutuall viewe.
Their choller swelles, whiles fell disposed mindes
Bounce in their breastes, and stirre uncertayne stormes.
Then palenesse wanne and sterne, with chearlesse
chaunge,

Possessing bleake their lippes and bloodlesse cheekes,
With troublous trembling, shewes their death is nere.

When Mordred sawe the danger thus approacht,

* i. e. pageants.

And boystrous throngs of warriors threatning blood,
His instant ruines gave a nodde at fates,
And minde, though prone to Mars, yet daunted pausde.

The hart which promist earst a sure successe,
Now throbs in doubts, nor can his owne attempts
Afforde him feare, nor Arthur's yeelde him hope.
This passion lasts not long : he soon recalls
His auncient guise, and wonted rage returnes.
He loathes delayes, and scorcht with scepters lust,
The time and place, wherein he oft had wisht
To hazarde all upon extreamest chaunce,
He offred spies, and spide pursues with speede.

Then both the armies mette with equall might,
This stird with wrath, that with desire to rule,
And equall prowesse was a spurre to both.
The Irish king whirld out a poysoned dart,
That lighting pearced deepe in Howel's braines,
A peerelesse prince and nere of Arthur's bloud.

Hereat the aire with uprore lowde resoundes,
Which efts on mountains rough rebounding reares.
The trumpets hoarce their trembling tunes doe teare,
And thundring drummes their dreadfull larums ring.
The standards broad are blowne and ensignes spread,
And every nation bendes his woonted warres.

Some nere their foes, some further off doe wound,
With dart, or sword, or shaft, or pike, or speare ;
The weapons hide the heavens ; a night composde
Of warrelike engines overshades the field.
From every side these fatall signes are sent,
And boystrous bangs with thumping thwacks fall
thicke.

Had both these camps beene of usurping kings,
Had every man thereof a Mordred beene,
No fiercelier had they fought for all their crownes.
The murthers meanlesse waxt, no art in fight,
Nor way to ward nor trie each others skill,
But thence the blade, and hence the bloud ensues.

Conan. But what ! did Mordreds eyes indure this
sight ?

Nuncius. They did ; and he himselfe, the spurre of fiends

And Gorgons all, least any part of his
Scapt free from guilt, enflamde their mindes to wrath,
And with a valure more then vertue yeelds,
He chearde them all, and at their backe with long
Outreached speare stirde up each lingring hand.
All furie like, frounst up with frantick frets,
He bids them leave and shunne the meaner sort,
He shewes the kings and Brytaines noblest pieres.

Gildas. He was not now to seeke what bloud to drawe :

He knewe what juice refresht his fainting crowne,
Too much of Arthur's hart. O, had he wist,
How great a vice such vertue was as then,
In civill warres, in rooting up his realme !
O frantike fury, farre from valures praise !

Nuncius. There fell Aschillus stout, of Denmarke king ;
There valiant Gawin, Arthurs nephew deare,
And late by Augels death made Albane king,
By Mordreds hand hath lost both life and crowne.

There Gilla wounded Cador, Cornish duke,
In hope to winne the dukedom for his meede.
The Norway king, the Saxons duke, and Picts
In wofull sort fell groveling to the ground.

There prince and peasant both lay hurld on heapes :
Mars frownde on Arthurs mates : the fates waxt fierce,
And jointly ranne this race with Mordreds rage.

Conan. But with what joy (alas) shall he returne,
That thus returnes the happier for this felde ?

Nuncius. These odds indure not long, for Mars retires,

And fortune, pleasde with Arthurs moderate feare,
Returnes more full, and friendlyer then her woont.

For when he saw the powers of fates opposde,
And that the dreadfull houre was hastened on,
Perplexed much in minde at length resolves,
That feare is covered best by daring most.

Then forth he pitcht : the Saxon duke withstoode,
Whom with one stroke he headlesse sent to hell.

Not farre from thence he spide the Irish king,
Whose life he tooke as price of broken truce.

Then Cador foreward prest, and haplie mette
The traytor Gilla, worker of these warres,
Of whom by death he tooke his due revenge.

The remnant then of both the camps concurre,
They Brytaines all, or most, few forreines left:
These wage the warres and hence the deaths insue:
Nor t'one nor t'other side that can destroy
Her foes so fast, as 'tis it selfe destroyed.

The brethren broach their bloud; the sire the
sonne's,

The sonne againe would prove by too much wrath,
That he, whom thus he slew, was not his sire.
No blood nor kinne can swage their irefull moodes:
No forreine foe they seeke, nor care to finde:
The Brytaines bloud is sought on every side.

A vaine discourse it were to paint at large
The severall fates and foiles of either side;
To tell what grones and sighes the parting ghosts
Sent forth; who dying bare the fellest breast;
Who chaunged cheare at any Brytaines fall;
Who oftneest strooke; who best bestowde his blade;
Who ventred most; who stoode, who fell, who failde.
Th'effect declares it all: thus far the field.
Of both these hoasts, so huge and maine at first,
There were not left on either side a score,
For sonne and sire to winne and loose the realme.

The which when Mordred saw, and that his sire
Gainst foes and fates themselves would winne the
field,

He sigh'd and twixt despaire and rage he cryed,
Here (Arthur) here, and hence the conquest comes:
Whiles Mordred lives, the crowne is yet unwoonne!

Hereat the prince of prowesse much amaz'd,
With thrilling teares and countnance cast on ground,
Did groaning fetch a deepe and earnest sigh.

Anone, they fierce encountering both concur'd
With griesly lookes and faces like their fates;

But dispar mindes and inward moodes unlike.

The sire with minde to safeguard both or t'one ;
The sonne to spoile the t'one or hazard both.

No feare nor fellnes failde on either side :

The wager lay on both their lives and bloods.

At length when Mordred spyde his force to faint,

And felt ~~him selfe opprest with Arthurs strength,~~

(Oh haplesse lad, a match unmeete for him)

He loathes to live in that afflicted state,

And ~~valiant with a forced vertue,~~ longs

To die the death : in which perplexed minde,

With ~~grenning~~ teeth and crabbed lookes, he cryes,

I cannot winne, yet will I not be wonne.

~~What should we shunne our fates or play with~~
Mars,

Or thus defraude the warres of both our blouds ?

Whereto doe we reserve our selves, or why

Be we not sought ere this amongst the dead ?

So many thousands murthred in our cause,

Must we survive, and neither winne nor loose ?

The fates that will not smile on either side

May frowne on both. So saying, forth he flings

And desperate runs on point of Arthurs sword,

(A sword (alas) prepar'd for no such use)

Whereon engorde he glides, till nere approcht,

With dying hand he hewes his father's head :

So through his owne annoy, he noyes his liedge,

And gaines by death accesse to daunt his sire.

There Mordred fell, but like a prince he fell ;

And as a braunch of great Pendragons grafte

His life breaths out : his eyes forsake the sunne,

And fatall cloudes inferre a lasting clips.

There Arthur staggering scant sustaind him selfe ;

There Cador found a deepe and deadly wound ;

There ceast the warres, and there was Brytaine lost !

There lay the chosen youths of Mars, there lay

The peerelesse knights, Bellona's bravest traine,

There lay the mirrours rare of martiall praise,

There lay the hope and braunch of Brute supprest :

There fortune laid the prime of Brytaines pride,
There laide her pompe, all topsie turvie turnde. [Exit.]

THE THIRD SCENE.

GILDAS, CONAN.

Gildas. Come, cruell griefes, spare not to stretch our
strengths

Whiles bailefull breasts invite our thumping fists.
Let every signe that mournefull passions worke
Expresse what pitious plights our mindes amaze.

This day supplants what no day can supply ;
These handes have wrought those wastes, that never
age,

Nor all the broode of Brute shall e'r repaire :
That future men may joy the surer rest
These warres prevent their birth and nip their spring.

What nations earst the former age subdude
With hourelie toyles to Brytaines yoke, this day
Hath set at large, and backwardes turnde the fates.
Hencefoorth the Kernes may safely tread their bogges;
The Scots may now their inrodes olde renewe,
The Saxons well may vow their former claimes,
And Danes without their danger drive us out.

These warres found not th'effect of woonted warres,
Nor doth their waight the like impression woorke :
There severall fates annoyde but severall men ;
Here all the realme and people finde one fate :
What there did reache but to a souldiers death,
Contains the death of all a nation here.

These blades have given this isle a greater wounde
Then tyme can heale—the fruite of civill warres :
A kingdom's hand hath goard a kingdom's heart.

Conan. When fame shall blaze these acts in latter
yeares,

And time to come so many ages hence,
Shall efts report our toyles and Brytish paynes ;
Or when perhaps our childrens children reade
Our woefull warres displaid with skillfull penne,

They'l thinke they heere some sounds of future facts,
And not the ruines olde of pompe long past :
Twill moove their mindes to ruth, and frame afresh
New hopes and feares and vowes and many a wish,
And Arthur's cause shall still be favour'd most.

He was the joy and hope and hap of all,
The realmes defence, the sole delay of fates ;
He was our wall and forte: twice thirteen yeares
His shoulders did the Brytaine state support.

Whiles yet he raign'd no forren foes prevailde,
Nor once could hope to binde the Brytaine boundes ;
But still both farre and nere were forc'd to flie ;
They thrall to us, we to our selves were free.

But now, and hencefoorth aye, adue that hope,
Adue that pompe, that freedome, rule and all !
Let Saxons now, let Normans, Danes and Scottes
Enjoye our medowes, fieldes, and pleasant plaines !
Come, let us flye to mountaines, cliffes and rockes
A nation hurt, and ne'r in case to heale !

Henceforth, the waight of fates thus falne aside,
We rest secure from feare of greater foile :
Our leasure serves to thinke on former times,
And know what earst we were, who now are thus.

[*Exeunt.*]

CHORUS.

1.

O Brytaines prosperous state, were heavenly
powers

But halfe so willing to preserve thy peace,
As they are prone to plague thee for thy warres !
But thus (O Gods) yea, thus it likes you still,
When you decree to turne and touse the worlde,
To make our errors cause of your decrees.

We fretting fume, and burning wax right wood ;
We crye for swordes and harmefull harnesse crave ;
We rashly rave, whiles from our present rage
You frame a cause of long foredeemed doome.

2.

When Brytaine so desir'd her owne decaie,
That ev'n her native broode would roote her up,
Seamde it so huge a worke (O heavens) for you
To tumble downe and quite subvert her state,
Unlesse so many nations came in aide?
What thirst of spoyle! (O fates) In civill warres
Were you afraide to faint for want of blood?

But yet, O wretched state in Brytaines fond,
What needed they to stoope to Mordred's yoke,
Or feare the man themselves so fearefull made?
Had they but lynckt like friendes in Arthurs bandes,
And joynde their force against the forren foes,
These warres and civill sinnes had soone surceast,
And Mordred, reft of rule, had feard his sire.

3.

Would gods, these warres had drawne no other
blood,
Then such as sproong from breasts of forreine foes!
So that the fountaine, fedde with chaungelesse
course,

Had found no neerer vents for dearer juyce.

Or if the fates so thirst for Brytish blood,
And long so deeply for our last decaie,
O, that the rest were sparde and safe reserv'd,
Both Saxons, Danes, and Normans most of all!

Heereof, when civill warres have worne us out,
Must Brytaine stand a borrowed blood for Brute.

4.

When prosperous haps, and long continuing blisse
Have past the ripenesse of their budding growth,
They fall and foulter like the mellow fruite,
Surcharg'd with burden of their own excesse:
So fortune, wearyd with our often warres,
Is forc'd to faint and leaue us to our fates.

If men have mindes presaging ought their harmes,
If ever heavie heart foreweene her woe,
What Brytaine liues so far remov'd from home,
In any ayre, or pole, or coast abroad,
But that even now, through natures sole instinct,
He feels the fatall sword imbrue his breast,
Wherewith his native soyle for aye is slaine!
What hopes and happes lye wasted in these warres!
Who knowes the foyles he suffered in these fieldes?

The Argument of the fift Act.

1. In the first scene Arthur and Cador returned deadlie wounded, and bewaild the misfortunes of themselves and their countrie, and are likewise bewailed of the Chorus.

2. In the second scene the Ghoast of Gorlois returneth rejoycing at his revendge, and wishing ever after a happier fate unto Brytaine; which done, he descendeth where he first rose.

The Argument and manner of the fift and last dumbe shewe.

Sounding the musicke, foure gentlemen all in blacke, halfe armed, halfe unarmed, with blacke skarffes overthwart their shoulders, should come uppon the stage. The first bearing alofte in the one hand, on the truncheon of a speare, an helmet, an arming sworde, a gauntlet, &c. representing the Trophea: in the other hand a target, depicted with a man's hart sore wounded, and the blood gushing out, crowned with a crowne imperiall, and a lawrell garland; thus written in the toppe: *En totum quod superest*; signifying the King of Norway, which spent himselfe and all his power for Arthur, and of whom there was left nothing but his heart to injoy the conquest that insued. The second bearing, in the one hand, a silver vessell full of golde, pearles and other jewels, representing the Spolia: in the other hand a target, with an Olephant and Dragon thereon fiercely

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2. In the second scene the Ghoast of Gorlois returneth rejoycing at his revendge, and wishing ever after a happier fate unto Brytaine; which done, he descendeth where he first rose.

The Argument and manner of the fift and last dumbe shewe.

Sounding the musicke, foure gentlemen all in blacke, halfe armed, halfe unarmed, with blacke skarffes overthwart their shoulders, should come uppon the stage. The first bearing alofte in the one hand, on the truncheon of a speare, an helmet, an arming sworde, a gauntlet, &c. representing the Trophea: in the other hand a target, depicted with a man's hart sore wounded, and the blood gushing out, crowned with a crowne imperiall, and a lawrell garland; thus written in the toppe: *En totum quod superest*; signifying the King of Norway, which spent himselfe and all his power for Arthur, and of whom there was left nothing but his heart to injoy the conquest that insued. The second bearing, in the one hand, a silver vessell full of golde, pearles and other jewels, representing the Spolia: in the other hand a target, with an Olephant and Dragon thereon fiercely

combating; the Dragon under the Olephant, and sucking by his extreme heate the blood from him, is crushed in pieces with the fall of the Olephant, so as both die at last; this written above: *Victor an victus?* representing the King of Denmarke, who fell through Mordreds wound, having first with his souldiers destroyed the most of Mordred's armie. The third bearing, in the one hand, a Pyramis with a lawrell wreath about it, representing victorie: in the other hand a target with this devise; a man sleeping, a Snake drawing neere to sting him, a Leazard preventing the Snake by fight: the Leazard, being deadlie wounded, awaketh the man, who seeing the Leazard dying, pursues the Snake and kils it; this written above: *Tibi morimur*, signifying Gawin, king of Albanye, slaine in Arthur's defence by Mordred, whom Arthur afterwarde slewe. The fourth bearing, in the one hande, a broken pillar, at the toppe thereof the Crown and Scepter of the vanquisht king, both broken asunder, representing the conquest over usurpation; in the other hand a target, with two Cockes painted thereon, the one lying dead, the other with his winges broken, his eyes pecked out, and the blood everye where gushing foorth to the ground; he standing upon the dead cocke and crowing over him, with this embleme in the toppe: *Qua vici, perdididi*, signifying Cador deadly wounded by Gilla whom he slewe. After these followed a king languishing, in complet harnesse blacke, brused and battered unto him, besprinkled with blood; on his head a lawrell garland, leaning on the shoulders of two Heraults in mourning gownes and hoods; th' on in Mars his coate of arms, the other in Arthur's, presenting Arthur victoriously, but yet deadly wounded. There followed a page with a target, whereon was portraited a Pellican pecking her blood out of her brest to feede her young ones, through which wound she dyeth; this written in the toppe: *Qua fovi, perii*, signifying Arthur's too much indulgencie of Mordred, the cause of his death. All this represented the dismayed and unfortunate victorie of Arthur, which is the matter of the Act insuing.

THE FIFTH ACT AND FIRST SCENE.

ARTHUR, CADOR, CHORUS.

Arthur. Come, Cador; as our frendship was most firme

Throughout our age, so now let's link as fast.
Thus did we live in warres, thus let us dye
In peace, and arme in arme pertake our fates.
Our wounds, our grieve, our wish, our hap alike,
Our end so neere, all crave eche others helpe.

Cador. O king, beholde the fruite of all our fame
Lo, here our pompe, consumed with our selves:
What all our age with all our warres had woonne,
Loe, here one day hath lost it all at once!

Well, so it likes the heavens: thus fortune gibes;
She hoyseth up to hurle the deeper downe.

Chorus O sacred prince! what sight is this we see?

1. Why have the fates reserv'd us to these woes?

Our onely hope, the stay of all our realme,
The pillar of our state, thus sore opprest!

O, would the gods had favour'd us so much,
That as we liv'd partakers of your paines,
And likewise joyde the fruit of your exploytes,
So having thus bereft our soveraignes blisse,
They had with more indifferent doome conjoynd
The subjects both, and soveraignes bane in one!

It now (alas) ingendereth double greefe,
To rue your want and to bewaile our woes.

Arthur. Rue not, my Brytaines, what my rage hath wrought,

But blame your king that thus hath rent your realme.
My meanlesse moodes have made the fates thus fell,
And too much anger wrought in me too much:

For had impatient ire indur'de abuse,
And yeelded where resistance threatned spoyle,
I mought have liv'd in forreine coastes unfoilde,
And six score thousand men had been unmoande!

But wrong, incensing wrath to take revenge,
Preferred chaunce before a better choyce.

Chorus. 'Twas Mordred's wrong, and to unjust desertes,
 2. That justly moovde your highnesse to such wrath:
 Your claime requir'd no lesse then those attempts:
 Your cause right good was prais'd and praide for
 most.

Arthur. I claimd my crowne; the cause of claime
 was good,
 The meanes to claime it in such sorte was bad.

Yea, rather then my realme and native soile
 Should wounded fall, thus brused with these warres,
 I should have left both realme and right and all,
 Or dur'd the death ordaind by Mordreds oath.

Cador. And yet, so farre as Mars could bide a
 meane,
 You hatelesse sought the safegard of them all:

Whereto the better cause, or badder chaunce,
 Did drawe, you still inclinde; preferring oft
 The weaker side, sometimes for love, sometimes
 For right (as fortune swaide) your sonne, your selfe.

So pittie spar'd what reason sought to spoyle,
 Till all at length with equall spoyle was spent.

Chorus. Would gods, your minde had felt no such re-
 morse,

3. And that your foes had no such favour founde!
 So mought your friends have had farre frendlier
 fates,
 If rebels for their due deserts had dyde.

The wickeds death is safety to the just;
 To spare the traitors was to spoile the true:
 Of force he hurtes the good, that helps the bad.

In that you sought your countries gaine 'twas
 well:

In that you shunned not her losse, 'twas hard.
 Good is the frend that seekes to do us good;
 A mighty frend that doth prevent our harmes.

Arthur. Well, so it was; it cannot be redrest;
 The greater is my greefe that sees it so.
 My lyfe (I feele) doth fade and sorrowes flowe,
 The rather that my name is thus extinct:
 In this respect, so Mordred did succede,

O, that my selfe had falne and Mordred livd !
 That having conquer'd all my foes but him,
 I mought have left you him that conquer'd me.

O heavie, wretched lot ! to be the last
 That falles ! to viewe the buriall of my realme,
 Where each man else hath fealt his severall fate,
 I onely pine opprest with all their fates !

Chorus. Although your highnesse do susteine such
 greefe

4. As needes enforceth all your realme to rue,
 Yet since such ruth affordeth no releefe,
 Let due discretion swage each curelesse sore,
 And beare the harmes that run without redresse.
 The losse is ours, that loose so rare a prince,
 You only win, that see your foe here foilde.

*[The breathlesse body of Mordred, in Armour as he
 fell, is brought upon the stadge.]*

Arthur. A causelesse foe. When warres did call me
 hence

He was in yeares but young, in wit too olde.
 As virtue shineth most in comliest wightes,
 When inward gifts are deckt with outward grace,
 So did his witte and feature feede that hope
 Which falsely trainde me to this wofull hap.

His minde transformed thus, I cannot chuse
 But long to see what change his face sustaines.
 My blood and kinred, doubled in his birth,
 Inspires a mixt and twice descending love,
 Which drives my dying vaines to wish his view.
 Unhealme his lucklesse head, set bare his face,
 That face which earst pleasde me and mine to much.

Chorus. See (worthiest king) the hope of all your realme,

1. Had not his lust to rule prevented all.

Arthur. I see (alas) I see (hide, hide againe :
 O spare mine eyes !) a witnesse of my crimes ;
 A fearfull vision of my former guilte ;
 A dreadfull horror of a future doome,
 A present gaule of minde. O, happie they
 Whose spotlesse lives attaine a dreadlesse death !
 And thou, O haplesse boye ! O, spight of fates !

(What mought I terme thee, nephew, sonne, or both ?)
 Alas, how happie should we both have bene,
 If no ambitious thought had vext thy head,
 Nor thou thus striv'de to reave thy father's rule,
 But staide thy tyme, and not forstalde us both !

Cador. The hoat spurde youth that forste the forward steedes,

Whiles needes he would his fathers chariot guide,
 Neglecting what his sire had said in charge,
 The fires which first he flung about the poles,
 Himselfe at last, most wofull wretch, inflamde.
 So to much love to hover in the heavens
 Made him to paie the price of rash attemptes.

Arthur. What ruth, (ah) rent the wofull fathers hart
 That sawe himselfe thus made a sonnelesse sire !
 Well, since both heavens and hell conspir'd in one
 To make our endes a mirror to the worlde,
 Both of incestious life and wicked birth,
 Would gods, the fates that linckt our faultes alike
 Had also fram'de our minds of friendlier mouldes !
 That as our lineage had approcht too neere,
 So our affections had not swarv'd to farre.

Then mought I livd t'inlarge the Brytaines praise
 In rearing efts the first triumphant Troy,
 And after, thou succeeding mine attemptes,
 Have spent thy courage in a juster cause.

But 'twould not be : ambition grewe to greate ;
 We could not joyne our mindes—our fates we joynde,
 And through thy blood a way was made to mine.

Chorus. And must we needes (O worthiest peeres) forgoe,

2. By this untimely fate, our greatest hope ?
 That in your ripest yeares and likeliest time,
 Your chiefest force should on this sodaine fall ?
 See, see our idle hopes, our brittle trust,
4. Our vaine desires, our over fickle state !
 Which, though a while they sayle on quiet seas,
 Yet sinke in surge ere they arive to rode.

* Before this line "Chorus" is again inserted in the margin, as if a new character were about to speak.

O, wofull warres! O Mordreds cursed pride,
That thus hath wrought both king and kingdomes
woe!

Cador. Let plaints and mournings passe; set moanes
appart.

They made much of themselves, yea, too, too much;
They lov'd to live, that seeing all their realme
Thus topsie turvie turnd, would grudge to dye.

Arthur. Yea sure: since thus (O fates) your censure
seemes,

That free from force of forreine foes, there rests
That Mordred reape the glory of our deaths,
B't it so: drive on your doome, work your decree:
We fearlesse bide what bane so e'r you bidde.

And though our ends, thus hastened to your heasts,
Abruptly breake the course of great attempts,
Yet go we not inglorious to the ground:
Set wish a part, we have perfournd inough.

The Irish king and nation wilde we tamde;
The Scots and Picts and Orcade Isles we wanne;
The Danes and Gothes and Friseland men, with all
The Isles inserted nere those seas; and next
The Germaine king and Saxons we subdude.

Not Fraunce that could prevaile against our force,
Nor lastly Rome, that rues her pride supprest.
Ech forreigne power is parcell of our praise:
No titles want to make our foes affraide.

This onely now I crave (O fortune, erst
My faithfull friend) let it be soone forgot,
Nor long in minde, nor mouth, where Arthur fell:
Yea, though I conqueror die, and full of fame,
Yet let my death and parture rest obscure.
No grave I neede (O fates) nor buriall rights,
Nor stately hearce, nor tombe with haughty toppe;
But let my carcasse lurke; yea, let my death
Be ay unknownen, so that in every coast
I still be feard, and lookt for every houre.

[*Exeunt Arthur and Cador.*

*no
Mordred*

CHORUS.

1.

Lo, here the end that fortune sends at last.
 To him whom first she heav'd to highest happe!
 The flattering looke, wherewith he long was led;
 The smiling fates, that oft had fedde his fame,
 The many warres and conquests which he gaind,
 Are dasht at once: one day inferres that foile
 Whereof so many yeares of yore were free.

2.

O, willing world to magnifie man's state!
 O, most unwilling to maintaine the same!
 Of all misfortunes and unhappy fates
 Th' unhappiest seemes to have been happy once*
 'Twas Arthur sole, that never found his joyes
 Disturb'd with woe, nor woes reliev'd with joye.
 In prosperous state all heavenly powres aspir'd;
 Now, made a wretch, not one that spares his spoile!

3.

Yea, fortunes selfe in this afflicted case
 Exacts a paine for long continued pompe.
 She urgeth now the blisse of woonted weale,
 And beares him downe with waight of former fame.

* *In omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus infortunii est fuisse felicem.*

Boet: de Consol. Philos. L. II.

Dante translates the passage thus:

— *nessun maggior dolore,
 Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
 Nella miseria.*

Inferno, C. v.

Fortiguerra follows him in these lines.

*E perchè rimembrare il ben perduto
 Fa piu meschino lo stato presente.*

Ricciardetto C. xi. st. 81.

His prayes past be present shame. O, tickle
trust,
Whiles fortunes chops and chaungeth every
chaunce,
What certaine blisse can we enjoy a live,
Unlesse, whiles yet our blisse endures, we die?

4.

Yea, since before his last and utmost gaspe,
None can be deemde a happy man or blest,
~~Who dares commit him selfe to prosperous fates,~~
Whose death preparte attends not hard at hand:
That sithence death must once determine all,
His life may sooner flie, then fortune flitte.

THE SECOND SCENE.

GORLOIS.

Gorlois. Now, Gorlois, swage thy selfe. Pride hath
his pay,
Murther his price, adult'rie his desert,
Treason his meede, disloyaltie his doome,
Wrong hath his wreake, and guilt his guerdon beares!
Not one abuse erst offered by thy foes,
But since most sternely punisht, is now purg'd.
Where thou didst fall, ev'n on the selfe same soile,
Pendragon, Arthur, Mordred and their stocke
Found all their foiles: not one hath scape revenge;
Their line from first to last quite razed out!

Now rest content, and work no further plagues:
Let future age be free from Gorlois ghost:
Let Brytaine hencefort bathe in endlesse weale.
Let Virgo come from heaven; the glorious starre,
The Zodiac's joy, the planets chiefe delight,
The hope of all the yeare, the ease of skies,
The aires reliefe, the comfort of the earth!

That virtuous Virgo, borne for Brytaines blisse;
That peerlesse braunch of Brute; that sweete remaine
Of Priam's state; that hope of springing Troy,

Which time to come, and many ages hence
Shall of all warres compound eternall peace.

Let her reduce the golden age againe,
Religion, ease, and wealth of former world.
Yea, let that Virgo come, and Saturne's raigne,
And yeares, oft ten times tolde, expirde in peace.
A rule that else no realme shall ever finde,
A rule most rare, unheard, unseene, unread ;
The sole example that the world affordes.

That (Brytaine) that renowme, yea, that, is thine.
B'it so : my wrath is wrought. Ye furies blacke
And uglie shapes that houle in holes beneath ;
Thou Orcus darke, and deepe Avernus nooke,
With duskish dennes out gnawne in gulfes belowe,
Receave your ghastly charge, Duke Gorlois Ghoast.
Make roome ! I gladly, thus revengde, returne !
And though your paine surpasse, I greet them tho :
He hates each other heaven, that haunteth hell.

Descendit.

EPILOGUS.

SEE heere by this the tickle trust of tyme ;
The false affiance of each mortall force ;
The wavering waight of fates ; the fickell trace
That fortune trips ; the many mockes of life ;
The cheerelesse change ; the easelesse brunts and
broyles,

That man abides ; the restlesse race he runnes.

But most of all, see heere the peerelesse paines ;
The lasting panges ; the stintlesse greefes ; the teares ;
The sighes, the grones, the feares, the hopes, the hates,
The thoughts and cares, that kingly pompe impartes.

What follies, then, bewitch th'ambitious mindes,
That thirst for scepters pompe, the well of woes !
Whereof (alas) should wretched man be proude,
Whose first conception is but sinne, whose birth
But paine, whose life but toyle, and needes must dye ?

See heere the store of great Pendragons broode,
The t'one quite dead, the t'other hastening on ;

As men, the sonne but greene, the sire but ripe,
 Yet both forestalde ere halfe their race were run :
 As kinges, the mightiest monarches of this age,
 Yet both supprest and vanquisht by themselves.

Such is the brittle breath of mortall man,
 Whiles humane nature workes her dayly wrackes :
 Such be the crazed crests of glorious crownes,
 Whiles worldly powers like sudden puffes do passe.
 And yet for one that goes, an other comes ;
 Some borne, some dead : so still the store indures.
 So that both fates and common care provide,
 That men must needes be borne, and some must rule.

Wherefore ye peeres, and lordings lift aloft,
 And whosoe'r in thrones that judge your thralls,
 Let not your sovereignty heave you too hye,
 Nor their subjection presse them downe too lowe.
 It is not pride that can augment your power,
 Nor lowlie lookes that long can keepe them safe.

The fates have found a way, whereby ere long
 The proude must leave their hope, the meeke their feare.
 Who ere receav'd such favor from above,
 That could assure one day unto himselfe ?
 Him whom the morning found both stout and strong,
 The evening left all groveling on the ground.

This breath and heate, wherewith mans life is fedde,
 Is but a flash or flame, that shines a while,
 And once extinct is as it n'er had bene.
 Corruption hourelly frets the bodies frame ;
 Youth tends to age, and age to death by kinde.
 Short is the race, prefixed is the end ;
 Swift is the tyme wherein mans life doth run :
 But by his deedes t'extend renowme and fame,
 That onely vertue workes, which never fades.

FINIS.

Thomas Hughes.

*Sat citò, si sat benè : utcunque,
 Quod non dat spes, dat optio.*

*only
 in hospital
 for ill
 person*

Heere after followe such
speeches as were penned by others, and pro-
nounced in stead of some of the former spee-
ches penned by Thomas Hughes.

A speach penned by William
Fulbecke, gentleman, one of the societie of Grayes-
Inne, and pronounced in stead of Gorlois
his first speeche penned by Thomas
Hughes, and set downe in the first
Scene of the first Acte.

Alecto, thou that hast excluded mee,
From feedes Elysyan, where the guiltlesse soules
Avoide the scourge of Radamanthus ire,
Let it be lawfull (sith I am remov'd
From blessed islands to this cursed shoare,
This loathed earth, where Arthurs table standes,
With ordure foule of Harpies fierce disteind)
The fates and hidden secrets to disclose
Of blacke Cocytus and of Acheron,
The floudes of death, the lakes of burning soules,
Where hellish frogges doe prophecie revenge;
Where Tartars sprights with carefull heede attende
The dismall summons of Alectos mouth.
My selfe, by precept of Proserpina,
Commaunded was in presence to appeare
Before the synode of the damned sprightes.
In fearfull moode I did performe their hest,
And at my entrance in, th' inchaunted snakes,
Which wrap themselves about the furies neckes,
Did hisse for joy: and from the dreadfull benche*
The supreme furie thus assignde her charge.
Gorlois, quoth she, thou thither must ascend,
Whence through the rancour of malicious foes,
Wearyed with woundes thou didst descend to us.
Make Brytaine now the marke of thy revenge:
On ruthlesse Brytaines and Pendragon's race
Disbursse the treasure of thy hellish plagues.
Let blood contend with blood, father with sonne,

* Printed *benthe*.

Subject with prince, and let confusion raigne.
She, therewithall, enjoynde the duskie cloudes,
Which with their darknesse turnde the earth to hell,
Convert to blood, and poure downe streames of blood.
Cornewell shall groane, and Arthurs soule shall sigh :
Before the conscience of Guenevora
The map of hell shall hang and fiendes shall rage;
And Gorlois' ghost exacting punishment
With dreames, with horrors and with deadly traunce
Shall gripe their hearts : the vision of his corse
Shalbe to them, as was the terror vile
Of flaming whippes to Agamemnons sonne.
And when the trumpet calles them from their rest,
Aurora shall with watry cheekes behold
Their slaughtered bodies prostrate to her beames :
And on the banckes of Cambala shall lye
The bones of Arthur and of Arthurs knightes,
Whose fleete is now tryumphing on the seas,
But shall be welcom'd with a tragedie.
Thy native soyle shalbe thy fatall gulfe,
Arthur, thy place of birth thy place of death.
Mordred shalbe the hammer of my hate
To beate the bones of Cornish lordes to dust.
Ye ravening birdes under Celenos power,
I do adjure you, in Alectoes name,
Follow the sworde of Mordred where he goes :
Follow the sworde of Mordred for your foode.
Aspyring Mordred, thou must also dye,
And on the Altar of Proserpina
Thy vitall blood unto my ghost shall fume.
Heaven, earth and hell concurre to plague the man,
That is the plague of heaven, earth and hell !
Thou bids, Alecto : I pursue my charge.
Let thy Cerastæ whistle in mine eares,
And let the belles of Pluto ring revenge !

One other speeche penned
by the same gentleman, and pronounced in steade
of Gorlois his last speache penned by Tho-
mas Hughes, and set downe in the se-
cond Scene of the fift and last Act.

Death hath his conquest, hell hath had his wish,
Gorlois his vow, Alecto her desire ;
Sinne hath his pay, and blood is quit with blood :
Revenge in tryumphe beares the strugling hearts !
Now, Gorlois, pearce the craggie rockes of hell,
Through chinkes whereof infernall sprites do glaunce,
Returne this answer to the furies courte :
That Cornewell trembles with the thought of warre,
And Tamers flood with drooping pace doth flowe,
For feare of touching Camballs bloodie streame.
Brytaine, remember ; write it on thy walles,
Which neyther tyme nor tyrannie may race,
That rebelles, traytors and conspirators,
The semenarye of lewde Cateline,
The bastard coovie of Italian birdes,
Shall feele the flames of ever flaming fire,
Which are not quenched with a sea of teares.
And since in thee some glorious starre must shine,
When many yeares and ages are expirde,
Whose beames shall cleare the mist of discontent,
And make the dampe of Plutoes pit retire,
Gorlois will never fray the Brytans more :
For Brytaine then becomes an angels land.
Both divels and sprites must yeelde to angels power,
Unto the goddesse of the angels land.
Vaunt, Brytaine, vaunt of her renowmed raigne,
Whose face deterres the haggies of hell from thee,
Whose vertues holde the plagues of heaven from thee ;
Whose presence makes the earth fruitfull to thee ;
And with foresight of her thrice happie daies,
Brytaine I leave thee to an endlesse praise.

Besides these speeches there was also penned a Chorus for the first act, and an other for the second act, by Maister Frauncis Flower, which were pronounced accordingly. The dumbe shewes were partly devised by Maister Christopher Yelverton, Maister Frauncis Bacon, Maister John Lancaster and others, partly by the said Maister Flower, who with Maister Penroodocke, and the said Maister Lancaster, directed these proceedings at Court.

EDITION.

Certainie Devises and shewes presented to her Majestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne, at her Highnesse Court in Greenewich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Majesties most happy Raigne. At London.—Printed by Robert Robinson. 1587. B. L.

A Woman is a Weathercock:

BY

NAT. FIELD.

A

Woman is a Weathercock,

A COMEDY,

BY

NATHANIEL FIELD.

WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS AND NOTES

BY

J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ.

LONDON:

SEPTIMUS PROWETT,

1829.

WOMAN IS A WEATHERCOCK.

CONSIDERING the celebrity Nathaniel Field has acquired of late years, in consequence of his connection with Massinger in writing *The Fatal Dowry*, it is singular that the two plays, in which he was unaided by any contemporary dramatist, should not yet have been reprinted, if only to assist the formation of a judgment as to the probable degree of Massinger's obligation. *A Woman is a Weathercock*, and its sequel, *Amends for Ladies*, are the productions of no ordinary poet: in comic scenes Field excels Massinger, who was not remarkable for his success in this department of the drama; and in those of a serious character he may be frequently placed on a footing of equality.*

Reed was of opinion (Dodsley's Old Plays, new edit. i. clvi.) that Field the actor was not the same person who joined Massinger in *The Fatal Dowry*, and who wrote the two plays above-mentioned; but the discovery of Henslowe's MSS. shews that they were intimately connected in authorship and misfortune. The joint letter of Nathaniel Field, Rob. Daborne, and Philip Massinger to Henslowe, soliciting a small loan to relieve them from temporary imprisonment, has been so often republished (last in Malone's Shakesp. by Boswell, iii. 337) that it is unnecessary to repeat it here.† Field,

* Mr. Gifford, with that zeal for the Author under his hands which always distinguished him (and without a single reference to Field's unassisted comedies, which, in fact, have remained unnoticed by every body,) attributes to Field, in *The Fatal Dowry*, all that he thinks unworthy his notion of Massinger. We are to recollect, however, that Field continued one of the Children of the Revels as late as 1609, and that when *A Woman is a Weathercock* was printed in 1612, he must have been scarcely of age.

† Two other letters from Field to Henslowe are printed for the first time in Malone's Shakesp. by Boswell, xxi. 395 and 404. One is subscribed "your loving and obedient son," and the other "your loving son," and both request advances of money; the first on a play, in the writing of which Field was engaged with Robert Daborne, and the second, in consequence of Field having been "taken on an execution of 30*l*." They have no dates, but others with which they are found are in 1613.

who penned the whole body of the letter, speaks in it of himself, both as an author and as an actor. It is without date, and Malone conjectured that it was written between 1612 and 1615; but from the Dedication to *A Woman is a Weathercock* we should conclude that in 1612 Field was not distressed for money: he there tells "any woman that hath been no weathercock" that he "cared not for forty shillings," the sum then usually given by the person to whom the play was inscribed. This assertion perhaps, was only a vain boast, while the fact might be, either that he could not get any body to patronize "so fameless a pen," or that, although he might not just at that moment be in want of "forty shillings," he might stand in need of it very soon afterwards, according to the customary irregular mode of living of persons of his pursuits and profession.

It might be inferred from a passage in the address "to the Reader," that *A Woman is a Weathercock* was written sometime before it was printed; and from the dedication of the same play, we learn that Field's *Amends for Ladies*, if not then also finished, was fully contemplated by the author under that title. An allusion to the Gun-powder Treason of 1605, is made in the first Act of *A Woman is a Weathercock*; but it could not have been produced so early.

Nathaniel Field was originally one of the Children of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel. Malone tells us that he played in *Cynthia's Revels* in 1601; but we have it on the authority of Ben Jonson himself, in the folio of 1616, that that "comical satire" was acted in 1600. In 1601 Field performed in *The Poetaster*, and in 1608 he appeared in *Epicæne*, which purports to have been represented by the "Children of her Majesty's Revels," for so those of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel were then called. In 1600 Field was, perhaps, one of the younger children, for in 1609 all the names of the company, but his own, were changed, many no doubt having outgrown their situations. He was therefore, evidently, a very young man when he published his *Woman is a Weathercock* in 1612. Only one edition of

it is known, but *Amends for Ladies* was twice published by the same stationer, viz. in 1618 and 1639. Mr. Gifford conjectured, very reasonably, that Field had assisted Massinger in writing *The Fatal Dowry*, before 1623.* He belonged to the Black-friars' company, and Fleckno speaks of him as a performer of great distinction.† According to the portrait in Dulwich College, he had rather a feminine look, and early in his career undertook female parts, which he afterwards abandoned, and obtained much celebrity as the hero of Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois*, originally brought out in 1607: in a prologue to the edition of 1641 Field is spoken of as the player "whose action *first* did give it name." It has also been supposed that he was dead in 1641, because, in the same prologue, it is asserted "Field is gone," but the expression is equivocal. The probability seems to be that he quitted the profession early, and in the address to *A Woman is a Weathercock*, he gives a hint that he will only be heard of in it "for a year or two, and no more.‡"

Amends for Ladies will be found, on the whole, a superior performance to *A Woman is a Weathercock*, and if the order of merit only had been consulted, it ought to have been first reprinted in this collection.

* Mr. Gifford also states (Massinger, i. lxxvii) that he joined Heminge and Condell in the publication of the folio Shakespeare of 1623.

† Ben Jonson, in his *Bartholemew Fair*, act v. sc. 3, couples him with Burbage, and speaks of him as the "best actor" of the day. This play was produced in 1614.

‡ Taylor, the water-poet, in his *Wit and Mirth*, introduces a supposed anecdote of "Master Field the player," which is only a pun upon the word *post*, and that not made by Field. Taylor had it, probably, from some earlier collection of jokes, and the compiler of *Hugh Peters's Jestes*, 1660, had it from Taylor, and told it of his hero.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT FREDERICK.
SIR JOHN WORLDLY.
NEVILL.
SCUDMORE.
STRANGE.
PENDANT.
CAPTAIN POUTS.
SIR INNOCENT NINNY.
SIR ABRAHAM NINNY.
BELLAFRONT.
KATHERINE.
LUCIDA.
LADY NINNY.
MISTRESS WAGTAIL.
A PRIEST.
A PAGE.
SERVANTS.

TO ANY WOMAN THAT HATH BEEN NO WEATHERCOCK.

I DID determine not to have dedicated my play to any body, because forty shillings I care not for;* and above, few or none will bestow on these matters, especially falling from so fameless a pen as mine is yet. And now I look up, and find to whom my dedication is, I fear I am as good as my determination: notwithstanding I leave a liberty to any lady or woman, that dares say she hath been no weathercock, to assume the title of patroness to this my book. If she have been constant, and be so, all I will expect from her for my pains : s that she will continue so but till my next play be printed, wherein she shall see what amends I have made to her, and all the sex,† and so I end my epistle, without a Latin sentence. N. F.

* Malone, in his *History of the Stage*, quotes this passage to shew that such was, in Field's day, the ordinary price of the dedication of a play. *Malone's Shakesp. by Bowell*, iii. 164.

† Referring to his *Amends for Ladies*, first printed in 1618, and afterwards in 1639.

TO THE READER.

READER, the saleman swears you'll take it very ill if I say not something to you too. In troth you are a stranger to me: why should I write to you? you never writ to me, nor I think will not answer my epistle. I send a comedy to you here, as good as I could then make; nor slight my presentation because it is a play, for I tell thee, reader, if thou be'st ignorant, a play is not so idle a thing as thou art, but a mirror of men's lives and actions: now, be it perfect or imperfect, true or false, is the vice or virtue of the maker. This is yet, as well as I can, *quales ego, vel Cluvienus*. Thou must needs have some other language than thy mother-tongue, for thou think'st it impossible for me to write a play that did not use a word of Latin, though he had enough in him. I have been vexed with vile plays myself a great while, hearing many; now I thought to be even with some, and they should hear mine too. Fare thee well: if thou hast any thing to say to me, thou know'st where to hear of me for a year or two, and no more, I assure thee.

N. F.

TO HIS LOVED SON*, NAT. FIELD, AND HIS
WEATHERCOCK WOMAN.

To many forms, as well as many ways,
Thy active muse turns like thy acted woman :
In which, disprais'd inconstancy turns praise ;
Th' addition being, and grace of *Homer's* sea-man,
In this life's rough seas tost, yet still the same :
So turns thy wit, inconstancy to stay,
And stay t' inconstancy. And as swift Fame
Grows as she goes, in Fame so thrive thy play,
And thus to standing turn thy woman's fall :
Wit, turn'd to every thing, proves stay in all.

GEORGE CHAPMAN.

* It was not unusual for elder poets to call the younger their *sons*. Ben Jonson allowed this title to Randolph, Howell and others. Field also subscribes himself to old Henslowe, the manager, "your loving son."

A WOMAN IS A WEATHERCOCK.

ACT. I. SCENE I.

Enter SCUDMORE, as in his chamber in a morning, half ready, reading a letter.

Scudmore legit. "Whereas you write, my fortune
and my birth

Made above yours, may be a real cause
That I must leave you, know, thou worthiest man,
Thou hast a soul whose plenteous wealth supplies
All the lean wants blind chance hath dealt to thee.
Yet could I think the gods from all their store,
Who ne'er knew indigence unto their will,
Would (out of all their stock of virtue left,
Or out of all new graces they can make)
Make such another piece as Scudmore is,
Then might he justly fear; but otherwise,
Sooner the masculine element of fire
Shall flame his pyramids down to the earth;
Sooner her mountains shall swell up to heaven,
Or softest April showers quench fires in Hell;
Sooner shall stars from this circumference
Drop like false fiery exhalation,
Than I be false to vows made unto thee,
In whom aught, ne'er a fault, I ne'er could see,
But that you doubted once my constancy.

Yours through the world, and to the end of time.

BELLAFRONT."

Scudmore. Loqui ut raptus. If what I feel I could
express in words,

Methinks, I could speak joy enough to men
To banish sadness from all love for ever!
Oh thou, that reconcil'st the faults of all
That frothy sex, and in thy single self

Confin'st, nay, hast engross'd, virtue enough
 To frame a spacious world of virtuous women,
 Had'st thou been the beginning of thy sex,
 I think the devil in the serpent's skin
 Had wanted cunning to o'ercome thy goodness,
 And all had liv'd and died in innocency,
 The white original creation! [Knocking within.
 Who's there? Come in.

Enter NEVILL.

Nevill. What, up already Scudmore! Ne'er a wench
 With thee? Not thy laundress?

Scudmore. Good morrow, my dear Nevill.

Nevill. What's this? A letter? Sure, it is not so—
 A letter written to Hieronimo.*

Scudmore. By heaven! you must excuse me. Come, I
 know,
 You will not wrong my friendship and your manners
 To tempt me so.

Nevill. Not for the world, my friend.
 Farewell—good morrow. [Exiturus.

Scudmore. Nay, sir, neither must you
 Depart in anger from this friendly hand.
 I swear I love you better than all men,
 Equally with all virtue in the world;
 Yet this would be a key to lead you to
 A prize of that importance—

Nevill. Worthy friend,
 I leave you not in anger. What d'ye mean?
 Nor am I of that inquisitive nature fram'd
 To thirst to know your private businesses.
 Why, they concern not me: if they be ill,
 And dangerous, 'twould grieve me much to know 'em;
 If good, they be so though I know 'em not.
 Nor would I do your love so gross a wrong
 To covet to participate affairs

* An allusion (one out of hundreds in our old plays,) to *The Spanish Tragedy*, A. iii. Hieronimo finds a letter, and taking it up exclaims,

“What's here? A letter! Tush, it is not so—
 A letter written to Hieronimo.”

See D. O. P. iii. 139.

Of that near touch, which your assured love
Doth think not fit, or dares not trust me with.

Scudmore. How sweetly does your friendship play
with mine,
And with a simple subtlety steals my heart
Out of my bosom. By the holiest love
That ever made a story, you're a man
With all good so replete, that I durst trust you
Ev'n with this secret, were it singly mine.

Nevill. I do believe you. Farewell, worthy friend.

Scudmore. Nay, look you; this same fashion does
not please me :
You were not wont to make your visitation
So short and careless.

Nevill. 'Tis your jealousy
That makes you think so; for by my soul
You have given me no distaste by keeping from me
All things that might be burthenous and oppress me.
In troth, I am invited to a wedding,
And the morn faster goes away from me
Than I go toward it; and so good morrow.

Scudmore. Good morrow, sir: think I durst shew it
you.

Nevill. Now, by my life, I not desire it, sir,
Nor ever lov'd these prying listening men,
That ask of other's states and passages :
Not one among a hundred but proves false,
Envious and slanderous, and will cut that throat
He twines his arms about. I love that poet
That gave us reading, not to seek ourselves
Beyond ourselves. Farewell.

Scudmore. You shall not go :
I cannot now redeem the fault I have made
To such a friend, but in disclosing all.

Nevill. Now, if you love me, do not wrong me so.
I see, you labour with some serious thing,
And think (like fairy's treasure) to reveal it
Will cause it vanish; and yet to conceal it
Will burst your breast—tis so delicious,
And so much greater than the continent.

Scudmore. Oh! you have pierc'd my entrails with
your words,
And I must now explain all to your eyes.
Read, and be happy in my happiness.

Nevill. Yet think on't: keep thy secret and thy
friend

Sure and entire. Oh, give not me the means
'To become false hereafter! or thyself
A probable reason to distrust thy friend,
Though he be ne'er so true.—I will not see't.

Scudmore. I die, by heaven, if you deny again.
I starve for council: take it—look upon it.
If you do not, it is an equal plague
As if it had been known and published.
For God's sake read! but with this caution,
By this right hand, by this yet unstain'd sword,
Were you my father flowing in these waves,
Or a dear son exhausted out of them,
Should you betray this soul of all my hopes,
Like the two brethren (though love made 'em stars)
We must be never more seen both again.

Nevill. I read it fearless of the forfeiture;
Yet warn you, be as cautelous not to wound
My integrity with doubt on likelihoods,
From misreport, but first exquire the truth.

[*Legit Nevill, Scudmore aliquando respiciens.*

Scudmore. Read, whilst I tell the story of my love,
And sound the truth of her heroic spirit,
Whom eloquence could never flatter yet,
Nor the best tongue of praises reach unto.
The maid there nam'd I met once on a green,
Near to her father's house: methought she shew'd—
For I did look on her, indeed no eye
That ow'd a sensible member, but must dwell
A while on such an object:
The passing horses and the feeding kine
Stood still, and left their journies and their food:
The singing birds were in contemption
Which should 'light nearest her; for her clear eyes
Deceiv'd even men, they were so like bright skies.

Near, in a rivulet, swam two beauteous swans,
Whiter than anything but her neck and hands,
Which they left straight to comfort her : a bull
Being baiting on the green for the swains' sport,
She walking toward it, the vex'd savage beast
Ceas'd bellowing, the snarling dogs were mute
And had enough to do to look on her,
Whose face brought concord and an end of jars,
Though nature made 'em ever to have wars.
Had there been bears and lions, when she spake
They had been charmed too ; for Grecian's lute
Was rustic music to her heavenly tongue,
Whose sweetness e'en cast slumbers on mine eyes,
Soft as content, yet would not let me sleep.

Nevill. " Yours through the world and to the end of
time

BELLAFRONT."

Which Bellafront ? rich Sir John Worldly's daughter ?

Scudmore. She is the food, the sleep, the air I live by.

Nevill. Oh, Heaven ! we speak like gods, and do
like dogs.

Scudmore. What means my——

Nevill. This day this Bellafront, the rich heir,
Is married unto Count Frederick,
And that's the wedding I was going to.

Scudmore. I prithee do not mock me. Married !

Nevill. It is no matter to be play'd withal,
But even as true as women all are false.

Scudmore. Oh ! that this stroke were thunder to my
breast ;

For, Nevill, thou hast spoke my heart in twain,
And with the sudden whirlwind of thy breath
Hast ravish'd me out of a temperate soil,
And set me under the red burning zone.

Nevill. For shame ! return thy blood into thy face.
Know'st not how slight a thing a woman is ?

Scudmore. Yes, and how serious too. Come ! I'll
t' the Temple :

She shall not damn herself for want of council.

Nevill. Oh, prithee, run not thus unto the streets !

Come, dress you better—so—Ah! as thy clothes
 Are, like thy mind, too much disordered.
 How strangely is this tide turn'd! For a world
 I would not but have call'd here as I went.
 Collect thy spirits : we will use all means
 To check this black fate flying toward thee. Come!
 If thou miscarriest 'tis my day of doom.

Scudmore.—Yes—now I'm fine. Married! It may
 be so;
 But, women, look to't: if she prove untrue,
 The devil take you all, that are his due! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter COUNT FREDERICK, a Tailor trussing him;
attended by a Page.

Count Frederick. Is Sir John Worldly up, boy?

Boy. No, my Lord.

Count Frederick. Is my bride up yet?

Boy. No.

Count Frederick. No! and the morn so fair?

Enter PENDANT.

Pendant. Good morrow, my thrice honored and
 heroic lord.

Boy. Good morrow your lord and master, you might
 say, for brevity sake.

Count Frederick. Thou'st a good tailor, and art very
 fine.

Pendant. I thank your lordship.

Boy. I, you may thank his lordship, indeed.

Pendant. 'Fore God, this doublet sets in print, my
 Lord;

And the hose excellent; the pickadel* rare.'

* Cotgrave tells us that " *Piccadilles* are the several divisions or pieces fastened together about the brim of the collar of a doublet." They are mentioned over and over again in old plays, as by Field himself (probably) in *The Fatal Dowry*, act iv. sc. 1. "There's a shoulder-piece cut, and the base of a *pickadille* in puncto." A *pickadel* is spoken of in *Northward Ho!* Sign. D. 8. as part of the dress of a female. See *Gifford's Ben Jonson*, v. 55, for the origin and application of the word.

Boy. He'll praise himself in trust with my Lord's tailor
For the next St. George's suit.

Count Frederick. Oh, good morrow,
Tailor: I abhor bills in a morning.

Pendant. Your honour says true :
Their knavery will be discern'd by daylight ;
But thou may'st watch at night with bill in hand,
And no man dares find fault with it.

Tailor. A good jest, i'faith. Good morrow to your
lordship. A very good jest. [*Exit Tailor.*

Count Frederick. I wonder my invited guests are so
tardy. What's o'clock ?

Pendant. Scarce seven, my lord.

Count Frederick. And what news, Pendant ?
What think'st thou of my present marriage ?
How shews the beauty to thee, I shall wed ?

Pendant. Why, to all women like Diana among her
nymphs.

Boy. There's all his reading.

Pendant. A beauty of that pureness and delight,
That none is worthy of her but my lord,
My honourable lord.

Count Frederick. But then her fortune,
Match'd with her beauty, makes her up a match.

Pendant. By heaven ! unmatched—for none fit but
lords,
And yet for no lord fit but my good lord.

Count Frederick. And that her sister, then, should
love me too,
Is it not strange ?

Pendant. Strange ! no, not strange at all.
By Cupid, there's no woman in the world,
But must needs love you, doat, go mad for you.
If you vouchsafe reflection, 'tis a thing
That does it home : thus much reflection
Catches 'em up by dozens like wild fowl.

Boy. Now, ye shall taste the means by which he eats.

Pendant. Nature herself, having made you, fell sick,
In love with her own work, and can no more
Make man so lovely, being diseas'd with love.
You are the world's minion, of a little man.
I'll say no more: I would not be a woman
For all has been got by them.

Count Frederick. Why, man, why?

Pendant. Heart! I should follow you like a young
rank whore,
That runs proud of her love; pluck you by the sleeve,
Whoe'er were with you, in the open street
With the impudency of a drunken oyster-wife;
Put on my fighting waistcoat, and the ruff
That fears no tearing; batter down the windows
Where I suspected you might lie all night;
Scratch faces, like a wild-cat of Pick'd-hatch.*

Count Frederick. Pendant, thou'lt make me doat
upon myself.

Pendant. Narcissus, by this hand, had far less cause.

Count Frederick. How know'st thou that?

Boy. They were all one, my lord.

Pendant. How do I know? I speak my conscience:
His beauties were but shadows to my lord.
Why, boy, his presence would enkindle sin,
And longing thoughts in a devoted nun.
Oh, foot! oh, leg! oh, hand! oh, body! face!
By Jove, it is a little man of wax.

Count Frederick. Thou'rt a rare rascal: tis not for
nothing,
That men call thee my commendations.

Boy. For nothing? no; he would be loth it should.

Enter CAPTAIN POUTS.

Count Frederick. Good morrow, and good welcome
captain Pouts.

Capt. Pouts. Good morrow to your honor, and all joy
Spring from this match and the first year a boy.
I commend these two verses o' purpose to salute your
honor.

* A place notorious for prostitutes; often mentioned.

Count Frederick. But how haps it, captain, that your intended marriage with my father in law's third daughter is not solemnized to day?

Pendant. My lord tells you true, captain; it would have saved meat.

Capt. Pouts. Faith, I know not. Mistress Kate likes me not; she says I speak as if I had pudding in my mouth, and I answered her, if I had it was a white pudding, and then I was the better armed for a woman; for I had a case about me. So one laughed, and the other cried "fie:" the third said I was a bawdy captain, and there was all I could get of them.

Count Frederick. See, boy, if they be up yet: maids are long lyers, I perceive.

Boy. How if they will not admit me, my lord?

Count Frederick. Why, if they should not admit you, my lord, you cannot commit with 'em, my lord.

Boy. Marry, therefore, my lord. [*Exit Boy.*]

Count Frederick. But what should be the reason of her so sudden alteration? she listened to thee once, ha?

Pendant. Have you not heard, my lord, or do ye not know?

Count Frederick. Not I, I swear.

Pendant. Then you know nothing that is worth the knowing.

Capt. Pouts. That's certain: he knows you.

Pendant. There's a young merchant, a late suitor, that deals by wholesale, and heir to land, well descended, of worthy education, beholding to nature.

Count Frederick. Oh, 'tis Young Strange.

Capt. Pouts. I'st he that looks like an Italian tailor out of the lac'd wheel?* that wears a bucket on his head?

* From this passage it should seem that Italian tailors in Field's time wore peculiarly wide and stiff ruffs, like a *wheel* of lace round their necks. Nothing on the point is to be found in R. Armin's *Italian Taylor and his Boy*, 1609. The Tailor in *Northward Ho!* 1607, sign. D. 3. speaks of "a Cathern (Katherine) *wheel* farthing-gale," but the farthingale was a hoop for the petticoats.

Count Frederick. That is the man; yet believe me, captain, it is a noble sprightly citizen.

Capt. Pouts. Has he money?

Count Frederick. Infinitely wealthy.

Capt. Pouts. Then, captain, thou art cast. Would I had gone to Cleveland! Worldly loves money better than I love his daughter. I'll to some company in garrison. Good bye.

Count Frederick. Nay, ye shall dedicate this day to me.

We speak but by the way, man: ne'er despair; I can assure you, she is yet as free as air.

Pendant. And you may kill the merchant with a look: I'd threaten him to death. My honor'd lord Shall be your friend—go to, I say he shall: You shall have his good word. Shall he, my lord?

Count Frederick. 'Sfoot! he shall have my bond to do him good.

Pendant. La! 'tis the worthiest lord in christendom. Oh, captain, for some four score brave spirits, once To follow such a lord in some attempt!

Capt. Pouts. A hundred, sir, were better.

Enter OLD SIR INNOCENT NINNY, MY LADY NINNY, SIR ABRAHAM, and MISTRESS WAGTAIL.

Count Frederick. Here's more guests.

Capt. Pouts. Is that man, and wife?

Pendant. It is Sir Innocent Ninny: that's his lady, And that Mr. Abraham, their only son.

[Count Frederick discoursing with Sir Innocent and Lady; Abraham looking about.]

Capt. Pouts. But did that little old dried neat's tongue, that eel-skin, get him?

Pendant. So 'tis said, captain.

Capt. Pouts. Methinks he in his lady should shew like a needle in a bottle of hay.

Pendant. One may see by her nose what pottage she loves.

Capt. Pouts. Is your name Abraham? Pray who dwells in your mother's backside, at the sign of the aqua-vitæ bottle?

Pendant. God's precious! Save you, Mistress Wagtail.
[Pulls her by the sleeve.]

Wagtail. Sweet Mr. Pendant.

Abraham. Gentlemen, I desire your better acquaintance. You must pardon my father; he's somewhat rude, and my mother grossly brought up, as you may perceive.

Count Frederick. Young Master Abraham! cry ye mercy, sir.

Abraham. Your lordship's poor friend, and Sir Abraham Ninny.

The dub-a-dub of honor, piping hot
Doth lie upon my worship's shoulder blade.

Sir Innocent. Indeed, my lord, with much cost and labour, we have got him knighted; and being knighted, under favour, my lord, let me tell ye he'll prove a sore knight as ere run at ring. He is the one and only Ninny of our house.

Lady Ninny. He has cost us something ere he came to this.

Hold up your head, Sir Abraham.

Abraham. Pish, pish, pish, pish!

Count Frederick. D'ye hear how—

Pendant. Oh, my lord.

Capt. Pouts. I had well hoped she could not have spoke, she is so fat.

Count Frederick. Long may'st thou wear thy knight-hood; and thy spurs

Prick thee to honor on, and prick off curs,

Abraham. Sir Abraham thanks your honor, and I hope your lordship will consider the simplicity of parents: a couple of old fools, my lord, and I pray so take 'em.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Abraham. I must be fain to excuse you here: you'll be needs coming abroad with me. If I had no more wit than you now, we should be finely laughed at.

Sir Innocent. By'r lady, his worship says well: wife, we'll trouble him no longer. With your honor's leave, I'll in and see my old friend Sir John, your father that shall be.

Lady Ninny. I'll in, too, and see if your bride need no dressing. *[Exeunt Sir Innocent and Lady.]*

Count Frederick. 'Sfoot, as much as a tripe, I think: Haste them I pray. Captain, what thinkest thou Of such a woman in a long sea voyage, Where there were a dearth of victuals?

Capt. Pouts. Venison, my lord, venison.

Pendant. I' faith, my Lord, such venison as a bear is.

Capt. Pouts. Heart! she looks like a black bombard † with a pint pot waiting upon it.

[Exit Mrs. Wagtail.]

Count Frederick. What countrymen were your ancestors, Sir Abraham?

Abraham. Countrymen! they were no countrymen: I scorn it. They were gentlemen all: my father is a Ninny, and my mother was a Hammer.

Capt. Pouts. You should be a knocker, then, by the mother's side.

Abraham. I pray, my Lord, what is yon gentleman? He looks so like a Saracen, that as I am a Christian, I cannot endure him.

Count Frederick. Take heed what you say, sir; he's a soldier.

Pendant. If you cross him, he'll blow you up with gunpowder.

Abraham. In good faith he looks as if he had a hand in the treason. ‡ I'll take my leave.

Count Frederick. Nay, good Sir Abraham, you shall not leave us.

Pendant. My Lord shall be your warrant.

Abraham. My Lord shall be my warrant? Troth, I do not see that a lord's warrant is better than any other man's, unless it be to lay one by the heels. I shall stay

• The old stage direction here is only *Exit Inno.*

† *Bombard* strictly means a piece of artillery, but it was metaphorically applied to large vessels containing liquor: in this sense it may be frequently found in Shakespeare, and other dramatists of his day.

‡ i. e. The gunpowder treason of 5th Nov. 1605.

here and ha' my head broke, and then I ha' my 'mends in my own hands; and then my lord's warrant will help me to a plaster, that's all.

Count Frederick. Come, come: captain, pray shake the hand of acquaintance with this gentleman; he is in bodily fear of you.

Capt. Pouts. Sir, I use not to bite any man.

Abraham. Indeed, sir, that would shew you are no gentleman. I would you would bid me be covered; I am a knight. I was knighted o' purpose to come a wooing to Mistress Lucida, the middle sister, Sir John Worldly's second daughter, and she said she would have me if I could make her a lady, and I can do't now. Oh, here she comes.

Enter SIR JOHN WORLDLY, MASTER STRANGE, KATE, and LUCIDA with a willow garland.

Count Frederick. My bride will never be ready, I think; here are the other sisters.

Pendant. Look you, my lord: there's Lucida wears the willow garland for you, and will so go to church, I hear. And look you, captain, that's the merchant.

Abraham. Now doth the pot of love boil in my bosom: Cupid doth blow the fire; and——
I cannot rhyme to bosom; but I'll go reason with her.

Sir John Worldly. You'll make her jointure of that five hundred, you say, that is your inheritance, Master Strange?

Strange. Sir, I will.

Sir John Worldly. Kate, do you love him?

Kate. Yes, faith, father, with all my heart.

Sir John Worldly. Take hands: kiss him. Her portion is four thousand.—Good morrow my son, Count: you stay long for your bride; but this is the day that sells her, and she must come forth like my daughter and your wife.

I pray, salute this gentleman as your brother;
This morn shall make him so, and though his habit
But speak him citizen, I know his worth
To be gentle in all parts. Captain!

Capt. Pouts. Sir.

Sir John Worldly. Captain, I could have been contented well

You should have married Kate.

Kate. So could not Kate.

Sir John Worldly. You have an honorable title: A soldier is a very honorable title.

A captain is a commander of soldiers;

But, look you, captain; captains have no money;

Therefore the Worldlys must not match with captains.

Capt. Pouts. So, sir, so.

Sir John Worldly. There are brave wars.

Capt. Pouts. Where?

Sir John Worldly. Find them out, brave captain.

Win honor and get money; by that time

I'll get a daughter for my noble captain.

Capt. Pouts. Good, sir, good.

Sir John Worldly. Honor is honor, but it is no money: This is the tumbler, then, must catch the coney.

[*Aspiciens Strange.*

Capt. Pouts. Thou art an old fellow.—Are you a merchant, sir?

Strange. I shame not to say yes. Are you a soldier, sir?

Abraham. A soldier, sir? Oh, God! I; he is a captain.

Strange. He may be so and yet no soldier, sir; For as many are soldiers that are no captains, So many are captains that are no soldiers.

Capt. Pouts. Right, sir: and as many are citizens that are no cuckolds——

Strange. So many are cuckolds that are no citizens. What ail you, sir, with your robustious looks?

Capt. Pouts. I would be glad to see for my money: I have paid for my standing.

Strange. You are the nobler captain, sir; For I know many that usurp that name, Whose standings pay for them.

Capt. Pouts. You are a pedlar.

Strange. You are a pot-gun.

Capt. Pouts. Merchant, I would thou hadst an iron tail,

Like me.

Count Frederick. Fie, captain : you are to blame.

Pendant. Nay, God's will ! you are to blame, indeed, if my lord say so.

Capt. Pouts. My lord's an ass, and you are another.

Abraham. Sweet Mistress Luce, let you and I withdraw :

This is his humor. Send for the constable !

Capt. Pouts. Sirrah, I'll beat you with a pudding on the 'Change.

Strange. Thou dars't as well kiss the wide-mouthed cannon

At his discharging, or perform as much

As thou dar'st speak ; for, soldier, you shall know,

Some can use swords that wear 'em not for show.

Kate. Why, captain, though ye be a man of war, you cannot subdue affection. You have no alacrity in your eye, and you speak as if you were in a dream. You are of so melancholy and dull a disposition, that on my conscience you would never get children ; nay, nor on my body neither ; and what a sin were it in me, and a most pregnant sign of concupiscence, to marry a man that wants the metal of generation, since that is the blessing ordain'd for marriage, procreation the only end of it. Besides, if I could love you, I shall be here at home and you in Cleveland abroad : I among the bold Britons, and you among the hot-shots.

Sir John Worldly. No more puffing, captain ; Leave batteries with your breath : the short is this.

This worthy count this morning makes my son,

And with that happy marriage this proceeds.

Worldly's my name, worldly must be my deeds.

Capt. Pouts. I will pray for civil wars, to cut thy throat

Without danger, merchant. I will turn pirate

But I'll be reveng'd on thee.

Strange. Do, captain, do :

A halter will take up our quarrel then.

Capt. Pouts. 'Swounds! I'll be reveng'd upon ye all!

The strange adventure, thou art now to make
In that small pinnace, is more perilous
Than any hazard thou could'st undergo.
Remember, a scorn'd soldier told thee so.

[*Exit Captain Pouts.*]

Strange. Go, walk the captain, good Sir Abraham.

Abraham. Good faith, sir, I had rather walk your horse. I will not meddle with him. I would not keep him company in his drink for a world.

Sir John Worldly. But what good do you, Sir Abraham, on my daughter?

I could be e'en content, my Lucida
Would skip your wit and look upon your wealth,
And this one day let Hymen crown ye all.

Abraham. Oh, no; she laughs at me and scorns my suit:

For she is wilder and more hard, withal,
Than beast or bird or tree or stony wall.

Kate. Ha! God-a-mercy, old Hieronimo.*

Abraham. Yet she might love me for my lovely eyes.

Count Frederick. I; but perhaps your nose she doth despise.

Abraham. Yet might she love me for my dimpled chin.

Pendant. I; but she sees your beard is very thin.

Abraham. Yet might she love me for my proper body.

Strange. I; but she thinks you are an errant noddy.

Abraham. Yet might she love me, 'cause I am an heir.

Sir John Worldly. I; but perhaps she does not like your ware.

Abraham. Yet might she love me in despite of all.

Lucida. I; but, indeed, I cannot love at all.

Sir John Worldly. Well, Luce; respect Sir Abraham I charge you.

* Sir Abraham quotes from *the Spanish Tragedy*, and Kate detects his plagiarism.

Lucida. Father, my vow is past : whilst the earl
lives

I ne'er will marry, nor will pine for him.
It is not him I love now, but my humor ;
But since my sister he hath made his choice,
This wreath of willow that begirds my brows,
Shall never cease to be my ornament
'Till he be dead, or I be married to him.

Pendant. Life ! my lord ; you had best marry 'em
all three. They'll never be content else.

Count Frederick. I think so, too.

Sir John Worldly. These are impossibilities. Come,
Sir Abraham,

A little time will wear out this rash vow.

Abraham. Shall I but hope ?

Lucida. Oh, by no means. I cannot endure these
round breeches : I am ready to swoon at them.

Kate. The hose are comely.

Lucida. And then his left leg : I never see it but I
think on a plum-tree.

Abraham. Indeed, there's reason there should be
some difference in my legs, for one cost me twenty
pounds more than the other.

Lucida. In troth, both are not worth half the money.

Count Frederick. I hold my life, one of them was
broke and cost so much the healing.

Abraham. Right hath your lordship said ; 'twas broke,
indeed,

At foot-ball in the university.

Pendant. I know he is in love by his verse-vein.

Strange. He cannot hold out on't : you shall hear.

Abraham. Well, since I am disdain'd, off garters blue !
Which signify Sir Abraham's love was true ;
Off cypress black ! for thou befits not me ;
Thou art not cypress of the cypress tree,
Befitting lovers. Out, green shoe-strings, out !
Wither in pocket since my Luce doth pout.
Gush eyes, thump hand, swell heart, buttons fly open !
Thanks, gentle doublet, else my heart had broken.
Now to thy father's country house at Babram

Ride post ; there pine and die, poor, poor Sir Abraham.

Omnes. Oh, doleful dump ! [*Music plays.*]

Sir John Worldly. Nay, you shall stay the wedding.

Hark the musick !

Your bride is ready.

Count Frederick. Put spirit in you fingers ! louder still,
And the vast air, with your enchantments fill.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter NEVILL, like a Parson.

Nevill. Thus for my friend's sake have I taken orders,
And with my reasons, and some hire besides,
Won the known priest, that was to celebrate
This marriage, to let me assume his place ;
And here's the character of his face and beard.
By this means when my friend confronts the maid
At the church door (where I appointed him
To meet him, like myself, for this strange shape
He altogether is unwitting of)
If she (as one vice in that sex alone
Were a great virtue) to inconstancy past
Join impudency, and slight him to his face,
Shewing a resolution to this match,
By this attempt it will be frustrate,
And so we have more time, though but 'till night,
To work, to speak with her, or use violence ;
For both my blood and means are at his service.
The reason, too, I do this past his knowledge
Is that his joy may be the more complete,
When being resolv'd she's married and gone,
I can resolve him otherwise. Thus I know
Good deeds shew double that are timely done,
And joy that comes past expectation.

Enter SCUDMORE in tawney.

Yonder he comes, dead in his melancholy.
I'll question him and see if I can raise
His spirit from that it restless rests upon :
He cannot know me. Ho ! good morrow, sir.

Scudmore. Good morrow to no living thing but one,
And that is Nevill. Oh! the vows, the vows,
The protestations and becoming oaths,
Which she has utter'd to me, so sweet so many,
As if she had been covetous not to leave
One word for other lovers, which I pitied:
She said, indeed, I did deserve 'em all.
Her lips made swearings sound of piety,
So sweet and prettily they came from her;
And yet this morn she's married to a lord.
Lord! lord! how often has she kiss'd this hand,
Lost herself in my eyes, play'd with my hair
And made me (a sin I am not subject to)
Go away proud, improved by her favours;
And yet this morn she's married to a lord.
The bells were ringing as I came along.

Nevill. Yes, sir; 'tis for the great marriage 'twixt——

Scudmore. Pray hold there; I know it too, too well.
The tokens and the letters I have still.
The dangers I have past for her dear sake
By day and night to satisfy her wishes!
That letter I so lately did receive,
And yet this morn she's married to a lord.
Oh memory, thou blessing to all men,
Thou art my curse and cause of misery,
That tell'st me what I have been in her eyes
And what I am! As it is impossible
To find one good in the whole world of women—
But how I lose myself, and the remembrance
Of my dear friend who said he would meet me here.
What is this priest that walks before the church?
Why walk you here so early, sir?

Nevill. I am appointed
Here to attend the coming of the brides,
Old Sir John Worldly's daughters.

Scudmore. Are there two?

Nevill. Yes, sir: the eldest marries Count Frederick.

Scudmore. Oh!

Nevill. The middlemost wears willow for his sake.
The youngest marries the rich merchant, Strange.

Sudmore. He is right worthy, and my well known friend.

But, parson, if you marry Bellafront
The horror of thy conscience shall exceed
A murderer's. Thou shalt not walk alone,
Nor eat, nor sleep, but a sad lover's groans
And curses shall appear and fright thy soul.
I tell thee, priest, they're sights more terrible
Than ghosts or sprites of which old wives tell tales.
Thou shalt run mad! thou shalt be damn'd indeed!

Nevill. Now, God forefend! the reason, sir, I pray?

Scudmore. She is contracted, sir, nay, married
Unto another man, though it want form:
And such strange passages and mutual vows!
'Twould make your short hair start through your black
cap
Should you but hear it.

Nevill. Sir, I'll take no notice
Of things I do not know: the injur'd gentleman
May bring 'em after into the spiritual court
And have a fair pull on't—a poor gentleman,
(For so I take him by his being deceiv'd)
'Gainst a great count and an old wealthy knight.

Scudmore. Thou Pancridge parson!* oh, for my friend
Nevill!

Some wile or other might remove this priest,
And give us† breathing to cross their intent.

Nevill. Alas! my dear friend.

Scudmore. Sir, do but you refuse to join them.

Nevill. Upon what acquaintance, sir?
They are great persons and I mean to rise:
I hope in time to have three livings, man;
And this were not the way, I take it, sir.

Scudmore. Why, look thee; there is gold.

Nevill. Oh, by no means.

Scudmore. I seldom knew't refus'd yet by thy coat,
But where it would have been a cause of good.

* Or "Pancras parson," a term of contempt for the convenient clergymen of that day.

† The old copy reads—"And give up breathing to cross their intent."

Nevill. But look ye; you shall see, I'm a divine
Of conscience quite opposite to a lawyer:
I'll give you council, sir, without a fee.
This way they are to come; if you dare do't
Challenge her as your own at the church door:
I will not hinder you. *[Music plays.]*

Scudmore. Oh, hark! they come.
Nevill, my friend! well, I must something do.
Oh, why should music, which joys every part,
Strike such sharp killing discords to my heart!

[Music. Enter Sir John Worldly, who meets the Parson and entertains him: Count Frederick, Ballafront, Strange, Katherine, Lucida with willow: Pendant, Sir Innocent Ninny, Lady Ninny, Mrs. Wagtail, Sir Abraham, melancholy. W. P. walk gravely afore all softly on. Scudmore stands before, and a boy sings to the tuned music.]*

THE SONG.

They that for wordly wealth do wed,
That buy and sell the marriage bed,
That come not warm'd with the true fire,
Resolv'd to keep this vow entire,
 Too soon find discontent;
 Too soon shall they repent.
But, Hymen, these are no such lovers,
Which thy burning torch discovers:
Though they live, then, many a year,
Let each day as new appear
 As this first; and delights
 Make of all bridal nights.
Iö, Hymen! give consent
Blessed are the marriages that ne'er repent!

Count Frederick. How now! who's this?

Pendant. Young Scudmore.

Omnes. 'Tis young Scudmore!

* What is the meaning of these initials must be left to the conjecture of the reader: perhaps *Waits Playing*, in reference to the attendant musicians.

Scudmore. Canst thou this holy church enter a bride,
And not a corse, meeting these eyes of mine?

Bellafront. Yes, by my troth: what are your eyes
to me,

But grey ones, as they are to every body.

The gentleman I do a little know:

He's frantic, sure! Forward, a' God's name, there!

Lucida. Sister, this is not well, and will be worse.

Scudmore. Oh, hold thy thunder fast!

Count Frederick. What is the matter?

Pendant. I'll ask, my lord. What is the matter, sir?

Sir John Worldly. Some idle words, my lord, 't may
be have past

'Twixt Scudmore and my daughter heretofore;

But he has dreamt 'em things of consequence.

Pendant. Pish! nothing else? set forward.

Nevill. By your leave.

Scudmore. Can there be such a soul in such a shape?

My love is subject of such misery,

Such strange impossibilities and misfortune,

That men will laugh at me, when I relate

The story of it, and conceive I lie.

Why, madam that shall be—lady in *posse*, do titles

Honours and fortunes make you so forgetful?

Bellafront. You are insolent—nay, strangely saucy,
sir,

To wrong me in this public fashion.

Sir John Worldly. Sirrah, go to: there's law.

Scudmore. There is, indeed,

And conscience too: old Worldly, thou hast one;

But for the other, wild Virginia,

Black Afric, or the shaggy Scythia,

Must send it over as a merchandise,

Ere thou shew any here.

Pendant. My honour'd lord,

Say but the word, I'll force him from the door.

Count Frederick. I say the word: do it.

Scudmore. You, my lord's fine fool!

Abraham. I, he, sir?

Scudmore. No—nor you my lord's fool's fool.

Sir Innocent Ninny. 'Ware, boy : come back.

Lady Ninny. Come back, I say, Sir Abraham.

Strange. 'Tis such a forward child.

[*Intrant Temptum.**

Scudmore. My passion and my cause of grief's so great,

That it hath drown'd all worthy parts in me ;
As drink makes virtue useless in a man,
And with too much kills natural heat in him,
Or else I could not stand thus coldly tame,
And see them enter, but with my drawn sword
Should hale her by the hair unto the altar,
And sacrifice her heart to wronged love.

Katherine. On my life, it is so.

Strange. Worthy friend,
I am exceeding sorry to see this,
But cannot help it.

Scudmore. I'll follow, and unfold all in the church.
Alas ! to what end, since her mind is chang'd ?
Had she been loyal, all the earthly lords
Could not have borne her so ! what heinous sin
Hath she committed, God should leave her then ?
I never dreamt of lying with my mother,
Nor wish'd my father's death, nor hated brothers ;
Nor did betray trust, nor lov'd money better
Than an accepted friend : no such base thought,
Nor act unnatural possess'd this breast.
Why am I thus rewarded ?—women ! women !
He's mad, by heaven, that thinks you any thing
But sensual monsters, and is never wise
Nor good, but when he hates you, as I now.
I'll not come near one—none of your base sex
Shall know me from this time ; for all your virtues
Are like the buzzes growing in the fields,
So weakly fasten'd t' ye by nature's hand,
That thus much wind blows all away at once.
Ye fillers of the world with bastardy,

* i. e. all but Kate, Strange, and Scudmore enter the church.
Strange and Kate follow immediately, and leave Scudmore *solus*.

Worse than diseases ye are subject to,
 Know I do hate you all ; will write against you
 And fight against you : I will eat no meat
 Dress'd by a woman old or young, nor sleep
 Upon a bed made by their still given hands.
 Yet once more I will see this feminine devil,
 When I will look her dead, speak her to hell !
 I'll watch my time this day, to do't, and then
 I'll be in love with death, and readier still
 His mortal stroke to take, than he to kill.

[*Cornets. Exit Scudmore.*]

*Loud Music. Enter as from the Church, SIR JOHN
 WORLDLY, NEVILL, like the parson ; COUNT
 FREDERICK, BELLAFRONT, STRANGE, KATHE-
 RINE ; SIR INNOCENT NINNY, LADY NINNY,
 SIR ABRAHAM ; LUCIDA, WAGTAIL, PENDANT.*

Count Frederick. Sweet is the love purchas'd with
 difficulty.

Bellafront. Then, this cross accident doth relish our's.

Strange. I rather think our's happier, my fair Kate,
 Where all is smooth and no rub checks our course.

Enter CAPTAIN POUTS.

Capt. Pouts. Are ye married ?

Count Frederick. Yes.

Capt. Pouts. The devil dance at your wedding ! But
 for you, I have something else to say. Let me see :
 here are reasonable good store of people. Know, all
 my beloved brethren (I speak it in the face of the con-
 gregation), this woman I have lain with oftener——

Omnes. How !

Lady Ninny. Before God, you are a wicked fellow
 to speak on't in this manner, if you have.

Strange. Lain with her ?

Capt. Pouts. Yes—good morrow. God give ye joy.

[*Exit Captain Pouts.*]

Sir John Worldly. I am speechless with my anger.
 Follow him !

If it be true, let her be prov'd a whore :
 If false, he shall abide the slander dearly.

Abraham. Follow that list: I will not meddle with him.

Sir John Worldly. Why speak'st not thou to reconcile those looks,
'That fight stern battles in thy husband's face?

Katherine. Thou art not so unworthy to believe him.
If I did think thou did'st, I would not open
My lips to satisfy so base a thought,
Sprung from the slander of so base a slave.

Strange. It cannot be! I'll tell you by to-morrow.
I am no fool, Kate. I will find some time
To talk with this same Captain—Pouts d'ye call him?
I'll be wi' ye to-night.

Katherine. Sir; you shall not.
What stain my honour hath received by this
Base villain, all the world takes notice of.
Mark what I vow, and if I keep it not
May I be so given o'er, to let this rogue
Perform his slander. Though thou wert ordained,
And in thy cradle mark'd to call me wife,
And in that title made as my defence,
Yet sufferd'st him to go away with life,
Wounding my honour dead before thy face;
Redeem it on his head, and his own way,
Ev'n by the sword, his long profession,
And bring it on thy neck out of the field,
And set it clear amongst the tongues of men
That all eyes may discern it slandered,
Or thou shalt ne'er enjoy me as a wife.
By this bright sun thou shalt not! Nay, I'll think
As abjectly of thee as any mongrel
Bred in the city—such a citizen
As the plays flout still, and is made the subject
Of all the stages. Be this true or no,
'Tis thy best course to fight.

Sir John Worldly. Why, Kate, I say——

Katherine. Pray, pardon me: none feels the smart
but I.

'Tis thy best course to fight: if thou be'st still,
And like an honest tradesman eat'st this wrong,

Oh, may thy spirit and thy state so fall
Thy first-born child may come to the hospital.

Strange. Heaven, I desire thee, hear her last request,
And grant it too, if I do slack the first !
By thy assured innocence I swear,
Thou hast lost me half the honour I shall win
In speaking my intent. Come, let's to dinner.

Katherine. I must not eat nor sleep, weep, till't be
done.

Bellafront. Sister, this resolution is not good :
Ill thrives that marriage that begins in blood.

Katherine. Sister, inform yourself I have no lady-
ship
To gild my infamy, or keep tongues in awe.
If God love innocence, I am sure
He shall not lose in this action.

Strange. Nor is't the other's life
Can give her to the world my perfect wife,
But what I do conceive. It is not blood, then,
Which she requires, but her good name again ;
And I will purchase it ; for, by heaven, thou art
The excellent'st new-fashion'd maid in this,
That ever ear shall hear a tale told of.

Omnes. But hear ye.

Strange. Good ; save your labours, for by heaven
I'll do't :

If I do't not, I shall be pointed at,
Proclaim'd the grand rich cuckold of the town ;
Nay, wittol, even by them are known for both.

Sir John Worldly. Take your revenge by law.

Strange. It will be thought
Your greatness and our money carries it :
For some say some men on the back of law,
May ride and rule it like a patient ass,
And with a golden bridle in the mouth,
Direct it unto anything they please.
Others report, it is a spider's web,
Made to entangle the poor helpless flies,
Whilst the great spiders, that did make it first,
And rule it, sit i'th midst secure, and laugh.

My law in this shall only be my sword ;
But, peradventure, not this month or two.

Katherine. This month or two ?

Count Frederick. I'll be your second then.

Strange. You proffer too much honour, my good Lord.

Pendant. And I will be your third.

Abraham. I'll not be fourth, nor fifth,
For the old proverb's good, which long hath been,
Says safest 'tis sleeping in a whole skin.

Lucida. God-a-mercy, Nab: I'll ha' thee, and be but
for thy manhood.

Sir Innocent. Wife, my Lady Ninny, do you hear
your son ? he speaks seldom, but when he speaks—

Lucida. He speaks proverbs, i'faith.

Lady Ninny. Oh, 'tis a pestilence Knight, Mistress
Lucida.

Lucida. I, and a pocky.

Katherine. This month or two ! d'ye love me ? not
before ?

It may be I will live so long Fame's whore.

[*Exit Katherine.*

Sir John Worldly. What lowering star rul'd my na-
tivity !

You'll come to dinner ?

Strange. Yes.

Count Frederick. Good-morrow, brother.
Come, let's be merry in despite of all,
And make this day (as 't should be) festival.

Sir John Worldly. This sour, thwart, beginning may
portend

Good, and be crown'd with a delicious end.

[*Exeunt all but Strange.*

Strange. So ; I'll not see you till my task be done :
So much false time I set to my intent,
Which instantly I mean to execute,
To cut off all means of prevention,
Which if they knew my day, they would essay.
Now, for the merchant's honour. Hit all right,
Kate, your young Strange will lie with you to-night.

[*Exit.*

gentlewoman : we should agree better ; and I pray whither are you riding with this burthen in your dosser.*

Wagtail. Why, sir, out of town. I hope 'tis not the first time you have seen a child carried out of town in a dosser for fear of the plague.

Page. You have answered me, I promise you : but who put it in, I pray ?

Wagtail. Not you, sir, I know, by your asking.

Page. I, alas ! I know that by my talent ; for I remember thus much philosophy of my school-masters, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. But come, setting this duello of wit aside, I have over-heard your confession, and your casting about for a father, and in troth, in mere charity, came in to relieve you. In the scrawl of beasts, horses, and asses, that have fed upon his common of yours, you named one Pendant : faith, wench, let him be the father. He is a very handsome gentleman, I can tell you, in my lord's favour : I'll be both secret and your friend to my lord. Let it be him ; he shall either reward thee bountifully, or marry thee.

Wagtail. Sir, you speak like an understanding young gentleman, and I acknowledge myself much bound to you for your council.

Pendant. (*within*) Will, Will !

Page. My lord has sent him to call me : now, I hold a wager on't, if thou be'st not a fool, as most waiting-women are, thou'lt use him in his kind.

Enter PENDANT.

Pendant. Why, Will, I say ! go ; my lord calls extremely.

Page. Did not I say so ? come, this is but a trick to send me off, sir. [*Exit Page.*]

Pendant. A notable little rascal.

* *Dosser.*] *Dosser* is used for a *basket* generally ; but as it means strictly a pannier for the back, (from the Fr. *dossier*) it is here used very inappropriately with reference to the burden Mrs. Wagtail carries before her. We have it in the modern sense of pannier in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. D. O. P. v. 237.

“ The milk-maids' cuts shall turn the wenches off,
And lay their *dosser*s tumbling in the dust.”

Pretty Mistress Wagtail, why d'ye walk so melancholy? I sent him hence o'purpose. Come, shall's do?

Wagtail. Do! what would you do? you have done too much already.

Pendant. What's the matter?

Wagtail. I am with child by you.

Pendant. By me? why by me? a good jest, i'faith.

Wagtail. You'll find it, sir, in earnest.

Pendant. Why, do you think I am such an ass to believe nobody has meddled with you but I?

Wagtail. Do you wrong me so much to think otherwise?

Thus 'tis for a poor damsel like myself,
To yield her honour and her youth to any,
Who strait conceives she does so unto many:
And as I have a soul to save, 'tis true.

Pendant. Pray do not swear: I do not urge you to't. 'Swounds, now I am undone! you walk somewhat round. Sweetheart, has nobody been tampering with you else? think on't, for by this light, I am not worth the estate of an apple-wife: I do live upon commending my lord: the Lord of Hosts knows it, and all the world besides. For me to marry thee will undo thee more, And that thou may'st keep me, keep thee in fashion, Sell thee to English, French, to Scot, and all, 'Till I have brought thee to an hospital; And there I leave you. Ha' you not heard, nor read Of some base slave, that wagging his fair head, Does whistling at one end of his shop walk, Whilst some gay man doth vomit bawdy talk In his wife's ears at the other? such a rogue, Or worse shall I be; for look ye, Mrs. Wagtail, I do live like a chameleon upon the air, and not like a mole upon the earth. Land I have none: I pray God send me a grave when I am dead.

Wagtail. It's all one: I'll have you for your qualities.

Pendant. For my good ones, they are altogether unknown; because they have not yet been seen, nor ever

will be, for they have no being : in plain terms, as God help me, I have none.

Wagtail. How came you by your good clothes?

Pendant. By undoing tailors ; and then my lord (like a snake) casts a suit every quarter, which I slip into : therefore thou art worse than mad, if thou wilt cast away thyself upon me.

Wagtail. Why, what 'mends will you make me? can you give me some sum of money to marry me to some tradesman, as the play says?

Pendant. No, by my troth. But tell me this, has not Sir Abraham been familiar with you?

Wagtail. Faith, not enough to make up a child.

Pendant. Could'st be content to marry him?

Wagtail. I, by my troth, and thank ye, too.

Pendant. Has he but kissed thee?

Wagtail. Yes ; and something more, beside that.

Pendant. Nay, and there ha' been any jot of the thing, beside that, I'll warrant thee, lay the child to him : Stand stiffly to it, leave the rest to me ;
By that fool thou shalt save thy honesty. [Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter STRANGE, knocking at a door.

Strange. Lies Captain Pouts here, pray?

Enter a SERVINGMAN.

Servingman. Sir, he does.

Strange. I prithee tell him here's a gentleman would speak with him.

Servingman. What may I call your name, sir?

Strange. No matter for my name.

Servingman. Troth, sir, the Captain is somewhat doubtful of strangers ; and being, as most Captain's are, a little in debt, I know he will not speak with you unless you send your name.

Strange. Tell him my name is Strange ; that I am come

About that business he spake of to-day. [Exit Servant.

To have sent a formal challenge by a gentleman,
He being to choose his time, might, peradventure,
Have made him shift himself the sooner over.

Enter Pouts above.

Capt. Pouts. Sir, I know your business. You are come to serve a warrant or a citation : I will not speak with you ; and get you gone quickly, too, or I may happen send a bullet through your mazard. [*Exit.*

Strange. Strange, cross, past expectation ! well, I'll try ;

My other course may speed more happily. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Music. Enter with table-napkins, COUNT FREDERICK, SIR JOHN WORLDLY, NEVILL, PENDANT, SIR INNOCENT NINNY, LADY NINNY, SIR ABRAHAM. SERVANTS with wine, plate, tobacco, and pipes.

Sir John Worldly. Sir, had you borne us company to church,
You had been the better welcome.

Count Frederick. 'Faith you had ; I must needs say so too.

Pendant. And I must needs say as my lord says.

Nevill. Sir John, I thank you, and my honour'd lord :

But I am sorry for this other news
Concerning Mistress Kate, and my good friend.

Sir John Worldly. 'Tis certain true : he keeps his word well, too ;

He said he would come to dinner.

Lady Ninny. All we cannot get Mistress Katherine out of her chamber.

Sir John Worldly. Oh ! good old woman, she is topshackled.

Lady Ninny. 'Tis pestilence sack, and cruel claret : knight ! stand to me knight, I say : up, a cold stomach ; give me my aqua-vitæ bottle.

Sir Innocent. Oh, Guiniver ! as I am a justice of peace and quorum, 'twere a good deed to commit thee. Fie, fie, fie !

Abraham. Why, alas : I cannot help this and I

should be hang'd: she'll be as drunk as a porter. I'll tell you, my lord, I have seen her so be-piss the rushes, as she has danc'd at a wedding. Her belly, and that aqua-vitæ bottle, have almost undone my father. Well, I think in conscience, she is not my natural begotten mother.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Nevill. Well said, my wise Sir Abraham.*

Count Frederick. Oh, this music!

And good wine is the soul of all the world.

Sir John Worldly. Come, will your lordship make one at primero,

Until your bride come forth?

Nevill. You can play well, my lord.

Count Frederick. Who, I?

Pendant. Who? my Lord? the only player at primero i'the court.

Abraham. I'd rather play at bowls.

Pendant. My lord's for you for that, too: the only bowler in London that is not a churchwarden.

Nevill. Can he fence well, too, Master Pendant?

Pendant. Who? my lord? the only fencer in Christendom. He'll hit you.

Abraham. He shall not hit me, I assure you, now.

Nevill. Is he good at the exercise of drinking, sir?

Pendant. Who? my lord? the only drunkard i' th' world—drinker, I would say.

Abraham. God-a-mercy for that.

Nevill. I would he heard him.

Abraham. I know a better whoremaster than he.

Nevill. Oh fie! no: none so good as my lord.

Pendant. Hardly, by'r lady, hardly.

Count Frederick. How now! who's this?

Enter SCUDMORE, like a servingman, with a letter.

Sir John Worldly. What would you?

* This remark and a question below in the old copy are given to *Luce*; but *Lucida* is not upon the stage, and could not be there, as *Scudmore* afterwards enters, pretending to be the bearer of a letter from her. The name of *Nevill* has been substituted for *Luce*, and at least there is no impropriety in assigning what is said to him. Two other speeches, attributed to her, obviously belong to *Sir Abraham*.

Scudmore. I would speak with the lady Bellafront, from the young lady Lucy.

Sir John Worldly. You had best send in your letter; she is withdrawn.

Scudmore. My lady gave me charge of the delivery, And I must do't myself, or carry it back.

Sir John Worldly. A trusty servant. That way leads you to her.

Count Frederick. This trust in servants is a jewel. Come, Let us to bowls i' th' garden. [Exeunt.

Scudmore. Blessed fate!

SCUDMORE passeth one door, and entereth the other, where BELLAFRONT sits in a chair, under a taffaty canopy.

Scudmore. Oh, thou, whose words and actions seem'd to me

As innocent as this smooth sleep, which hath
Lock'd up thy powers, would thou hadst slept when first
Thou sent'st and proffered'st me beauty and love!

I had been ignorant, then, of such a loss.

Happy's that wretch, in my opinion,

That never own'd scarce jewels, or bright sums,

He can lose nothing but his constant wants;

But speakless is his plague, that once had store,

And from superfluous state falls to be poor.

Such is my hell-bred hap! could nature make

So fair a superficies to enclose

So false a heart? This is like gilded tombs,

Compacted of jet pillars, marble stones,

Which hide from's stinking flesh, and rotten bones.

Pallas so sat (methinks) in Hector's tent.

But, time, so precious and so dangerous,

Why do I lose thee?—Madam, my lady, madam.

Bellafront. Believe me, my dear friend, I was en-
forc'd.

Ha! I had a dream as strange as thou art, fellow...

How cam'st thou hither? what's thy business?

Scudmore. That letter, madam, tells you.

Bellafront. Letter? ha!

What do'st thou mock me? here is nothing writ.

Scudmore. Can you read any thing, then, in this face?

Bellafront. Oh basilisk ! remove thee from my sight,
Or thy heart's blood shall pay thy rash attempt !
Ho ! who attends us there ?

Scudmore. Stir not a foot,
And stop your clamorous acclamations,
Or, by the bitterness of my fresh wrongs,
I'll send your ladyship to the devil quick !
I know the hazard I do undergo,
And whatsoe'er after becomes of me,
I'll make you sure first. I am come to speak,
And speak I will, freely, and to bring back
Your letters, and such things you sent ; and then,
I'll ne'er see those deceiving eyes again.

Bellafront. Oh, I am sick of my corruption !
For God's sake, do not speak a word more to me.

Scudmore. Not speak ? yes woman, I will roar aloud
Call thee the falsest fair that ever breath'd ;
Tell thee, that in this marriage thou hast drown'd
All virtue left to credit thy weak sex,
Which being (as 'twere) committed to thy trust,
Thou traitorously hast betray'd it thus !
Did I entice, or ever send thee gifts,
'To allure thee to reflect a beam on me ?
Nay, did'st not thou thyself send, and invent,
Past human wit, our means of intercourse ?
Why dost thou, then, prove base unto thyself,
Perjur'd and impious ? know, the good thou hast lost
In my opinion doth outvalue far
The airy honours thou art married to.

Bellafront. Oh, peace ! for you speak sharpness to
my soul,
More torturous than hell's plagues to the damn'd.
For love's sake hear me speak !

Scudmore. For love's sake ? no :
Love is my surfeit, and is turn'd in me
To a disease.

Bellafront. Tyrant ! my knees shall beg,
Till they get liberty for my tongue to speak,
Drown'd, almost, in the rivers of mine eyes.

Scudmore. What canst thou say ? art thou not married ?

Bellafront. Alas, I was enforc'd ! first, by the threats
Of a severe father, that in his hand
Did gripe my fortunes: next to that, the fame
Of your neglect, and liberal-talking tongue,
Which bred my honour an eternal wrong.

Scudmore. Pish, these are painted causes ! till this
morn
He liv'd not in this land, that durst accuse
My integrity of such an ignorance.
But take your letters here, your paper vows,
Your picture, and your bracelets ; and if ever
I build again upon a woman's faith,
May sense forsake me ! I will sooner trust
Dice, or a reconciled enemy : oh, God !
What an internal joy my heart has felt,
Sitting at one of these same idle plays,
When I have seen a maid's inconstancy
Presented to the life ! how my glad eyes
Have stole about me, fearing lest my looks
Should tell the company convented there,
The mistress that I had free of such faults.

Bellafront. Oh ! still retain her so ! dear Scudmore
hear me.

Scudmore. Retain thee so ? it is impossible !
Art thou not married ? 'tis impossible !
Oh, no ! I do despise thee, and will fly
As far on earth as to the Antipodes,
And by some learn'd magician, whose deep art
Can know thy residence on this hemisphere,
There I'll be plac'd, my feet just against thine,
To express the opposite nature, which our hearts
Must henceforth hold.

Bellafront. Oh ! rather shoot me, friend,
Than let me hear thee speak such bitterness !
Oh, pity me ! redeem me from the hell,
That in this marriage I am like to feel !
I'll rather fly to barren wildernesses,
And suffer all wants with thee, Scudmore, than
Live with all plenty in this husband's arms.
Thou shalt perceive I am not such a woman,

That is transported with vain dignities.
Oh ! thy dear words have knock'd at my heart's gates,
And enter'd. They have pluck'd the devil's vizard,
(That did deform this face, and blind my soul)
Off, and thy Bellafront presents herself,
(Lav'd in a bath of contrite virginal tears,)
Cloth'd in the original beauty that was thine !
Now, for thy love to God, count this not done :
Let time go back, and be as when before it,
Or from thy memory raze it for ever !

Scudmore. Ha, ha ! heart ! was there ever such
 strange creatures frain'd ?
Why dost thou speak such foolish, senseless things ?
Can thy forsaking him redeem thy fault ?
No, I will never mend an ill with worse.
Why, thy example will make women false,
When they shall hear it, that before were true ;
For after ill examples we do fly,
But must be vow'd to deeds of piety.
Oh woman, woman, woman, woman, woman !
The cause of future, and original sin,
How happy (had you not) should we have been !
False where you kiss, but murdering in your ire ;
Love all can woo, know all men you desire :
Ungrateful, yet most impudent to crave,
Torturous as hell, insatiate as the grave :
Lustful as monkies, grinning in your ease,
Whom if we make not idols, we ne'er please :
More vainly proud than fools, as ignorant ;
Baser than parasites ; witches that enchant
And make us senseless, to think death or life
Is yours to give, when only our belief
Doth make you able to deceive us so :
Begot by drunkards to breed sin and woe ;
As many foul diseases hide your veins,
As there are mischiefs coin'd in your quick brains :
Not quick in wit, fit to perform least good,
But to subvert whole states, shed seas of blood :
Twice as deceitful as are crocodiles,
For you betray both ways—with tears and smiles.

Yet questionless there are as good, as bad.
Hence! let me go.

Bellafront. Hear me, and thou shalt go.
I do confess I do deserve all this,
Have wounded all the faith my sex doth owe,
But will recover it, or pay my life.
Strive not to go, for you shall hear me first.
I charge thee, Scudmore, thou hard-hearted man,
Upon my knees, thou most implacable man,
Since penitence

And satisfaction too, gets not thy pardon,
I charge thee use some means to set me free,
Before the revels of this night have end.

Prevent my entering to this marriage bed;
Or by the memory of Lucretia's knife,
E'er morn I'll die a virgin, though a wife. [Exit.

Scudmore. Pish! do: the world will have one mis-
chief less. [Exit.

SCENE III.

Enter SIR ABRAHAM NINNY throwing down his bowls.

Abraham. Bowl they that list, for I will bowl no
more.

Cupid, that little bowler, in my breast
Rubs at my heart and will not let me rest.

[*Within: rub, rub, fly, fly.**

I, I, you may cry rub, fly, to your bowls,
For you are free: love troubles not your jowls,
But from my head to heel, from heel to heart,
Behind, before, and round about I smart.
Then, in this arbour, sitting all alone,
In doleful ditty, let me howl my moan.
Oh, boy! leave pricking, for I vail my bonnet:†
Give me but breath while I do write a sonnet.

* The exclamations of the bowlers whom Sir Abraham has just quitted.

† *Vail my bonnet.*] The French phrase is *avalier le bonnet*, i. e. to lower the bonnet. The etymology of *avalier* is disputed, but our *vail*, or as it is usually spelt *vail*, is from *avalier*.

Enter PENDANT.

Pendant. I have lost my money, and Sir Abraham too. Yonder he sits, at his muse, by heaven, drown'd in the ocean of his love. Lord! how he labours, like a hard-bound poet whose brains had a frost in 'em. Now it comes.

Abraham. *I die, I sigh.*

Pendant. What, after you are dead? very good.

Abraham. *I die, I sigh, thou precious stony jewel.*

Pendant. Good; because she is hard-hearted.

Abraham. *I die.* [Write.

Pendant. He has died three times, and come again.

Abraham. — *I sigh thou precious stony jewel,*

Wearing of silk, why art thou still so cruel. [Write.

Pendant. Oh, Newington conceit! and quieting eke.*

Abraham. *Thy servant, Abraham, sends this foolish ditty.*

Pendant. You say true, in troth, sir.

Abraham. *Thy servant, Abraham, sends this foolish ditty unto thee, pity both him and it.* [Write.

Pendant. *Ty unto thee:* well, if she do not pity both, 'tis pity she should live.

Abraham. *But if thou still wilt poor Sir Abraham frump,*

Come, grim death, come! here give thy mortal thump.

[Write.

So; now I'll read it together.

I die, I sigh, thou precious stony jewel,

Oh wherefore wear'st thou silk; yet art so cruel?

To thee thy Ninny sends this foolish dit-

Ty, and *pity both him and it.†*

* This was probably a hit at the sort of "worsted conceits" in plays represented at the old Newington theatre, which appears at one time to have been under the management of Philip Henslowe.

† There is a blank in this line in the old copy. Sir Abraham seems as fastidious as most versifiers, and it will be observed, that in reading over his "sonnet" he makes a variety of alterations. Perhaps the blank was left to shew that he could not fill it up to his satisfaction, not liking the line as it stood when he first committed it to paper:

"Ty unto thee, pity both him and it."

*If thou deny, and still Sir Abraham frump,
Come, grim death, come! here give thy mortal thump.
Let me see, who shall I get, now, to set it to a dumpish
note?*

Pendant. In good faith, I do not know; but nobody that is wise, I am sure of that. It will be an excellent matter sung to the knocking of the tongs. But to my business.—God save thee worthy and right worshipful Sir Abraham! what, musing and writing? oh, this love will undo us all, and that made me prevent love, and undo myself. But what news of Mistress Lucida? ha! will she not come off, nor cannot you come on, little Abraham?

Abraham. 'Faith, I have courted her, and courted her; and she does, as every body else does, laughs at all I can do or say.

Pendant. Laughs; why that's a sign she is pleas'd. Do you not know when a woman laughs, she's pleas'd?

Abraham. I; but she laughs most shamefully, and most scornfully.

Pendant. Scornfully! hang her, she's but a bawble.

Abraham. She's the fitter for my turn, sir; for they will not stick to say, I am a fool, for all I am a knight.*

Pendant. Love has made you witty, little Nab: but what a mad villain art thou, a striker, a fiftieth part of Hercules, to get one wench with child, and go a-wooing to another.

Abraham. With child! a good jest, i'faith: whom have I got with child?

Pendant. Why Mistress Wagtail is with child, and will be depos'd 'tis yours. She is my kinswoman, and I would be loth our house should suffer any disgrace in her: if there be law in England, which there should be, if we may judge by their consciences, or if I have any friends, the wench shall take no wrong. I cannot tell, I think my lord will stick to me.

* Alluding to the *bawble* or truncheon, usually with a head carved at the top of it, part of the insignia of the ancient licenced fool or jester.

Abraham. D'ye hear? talk not to me of friends, law, or conscience: if your kinswoman say she is with child by me, your kinswoman is an errant whore. Od's will, have you nobody to put your gulls upon but knights? That Wagtail is a whore, and I'll stand to it.

Pendant. Nay, you have stood to it already. But to call my cousin whore! you have not a mind to have your throat cut, ha' you?

Abraham. Troth, no great mind, sir.

Pendant. Recant your words, or die.

[*Draws his sword.*]

Abraham. Recant? oh base! out sword, mine honour keep:

Love, thou hast made a lion of a sheep.

Pendant. But will you fight in this quarrel?

Abraham. I am resolv'd.

Pendant. Heart! I have pull'd an old house over my head: here's like to be a tall fray. I perceive a fool's valianter than a knave at all times. Would I were well rid of him: I had as lief meet Hector, God knows, if he dare fight at all: they are all one to me, or to speak more modernly, with one of the roaring boys.

Abraham. Have you done your prayers?

Pendant. Pray give me leave, sir: put up, an't please you. Are you sure my cousin Wagtail is a whore?

Abraham. With sword in hand I do it not recant.

Pendant. Well, it shall never be said Jack Pendant would venture his blood in a whore's quarrel. But whore, or no whore, she is most desperately in love with you: praises your head, your face, your nose, your eyes, your mouth: the fire of her commendations makes the pot of your good parts run over; and to conclude, if the whore have you not, I think the pond at Islington will be her bathing-tub, and give an end to mortal misery; but if she belie you —: pray, put up, sir; she is an errant whore, and so let her go.

Abraham. Does she so love me, say you?

Pendant. Yes, yes: out of all question, the whore does love you abominable.

Abraham. No more of these foul terms : if she do love me,
That goes by fate, I know it by myself.
I'll not deny but I have dallied with her.

Pendant. I, but hang her, whore, dallying will get no children.

Abraham. Another whore, and draw. Where is the girl?

Pendant. Condoling her misfortune in the gallery ;
Upon the rushes sitting all alone,
And for Sir Abraham's love venting her moan.

Abraham. I know not what to say : fate's above all.
Come, let's go over-hear her. Be this true,
Welcome my Wagtail, scornful Luce adieu. [Exit.

Pendant. One way it takes yet. 'Tis a fool's condition,
Whom none can love, out of his penury
To catch most greedily at any wench
That gives way to his love, or feigns her own
First unto him : and so Sir Abraham now
I hope will buy the pool where I will fish.
Thus a quick knave makes a fat fool his dish. [Exit.

Enter CAPTAIN POUTS.

Capt. Pouts. I have played the melancholy ass, and partly the knave, in this last business, but as the parson said that got the wench with child, " 'Tis done now, sir ; it cannot be undone, and my purse or I must smart for it."

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. Your trunks are shipped, and the tide falls out about twelve to-night.

Capt. Pouts. I'll away. This law is like the basilisk, to see it first is the death on't.* This night, and noble London farewell ; I will never see thee more, till I be knighted for my virtues. Let me see, when shall I return ? and yet I do not think, but there are a great many dubb'd for their virtues ; otherwise how could there be so many poor knights ?†

* Should we not read " is the death on us" or " of us?"

† This is one out of innumerable hits in our old dramatists,

Enter STRANGE, like a soldier, amazedly.

What art thou? what's thy news?

Strange. 'Zoons! a man is fain to break open doors, ere he can get in to you. I would speak with a general sooner.

Capt. Pouts. Sir, you may: he owes less, peradventure; or if more, he is more able to pay't. What art't?

Strange. A soldier; one that lives upon this buff jerkin: 't was made of Fortunatus's pouch; and these are the points I stand upon. I am a soldier.

Capt. Pouts. A counterfeited rogue you are.

Strange. As true a rogue as thyself. Thou wrong'st me. Send your man away: go to, I have strange and welcome business to impart. The merchant is dead for shame: let's walk into the fields, send away your man.

Capt. Pouts. How?

Strange. Here is a letter from the lusty Kate, That tells you all: I must not give it you, But upon some conditions. Let us walk, And send away your man.

Capt. Pouts. Go, sirrah, and bespeak supper at the Bear, and provide oars: I'll see Gravesend to-night.

[*Erit Servant.*

Strange. The gentlewoman will run mad after you then. I'll tell you more, let's walk. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter SCUDMORE and NEVILL.

I see great'st spirits* can serve to their own ends.

at the indiscriminate creation of knights by James I. Their poverty was a constant subject of laughter. See Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*, A. II.; Chapman's *Monsieur d'Olive*, A. I.; and *Widows Tears*, A. IV.; Barry's *Ram Alley*, A. I.; and Middleton's *Mad World my Masters*, A. I., &c. Field's satire is as pungent as that of the best of them.

* *Spirits.*] The word *spirit* in our old poets was often pronounced as one syllable, and hence in fact the corruption *sprite*. This line is not measure without so reading it.

Were you the seeming serving-man that past by?

Scudmore. By my sad heart, I was; and not a tittle
Of my relation to thee wrong or feign'd.

Nevill. In troth, you were to blame to venture so:
Mischiefs find us, we need not mischiefs seek.

Scudmore. I am not tied to that opinion,*
They are like women, which do always shun
Their lovers and pursuers, and do follow
With most rank appetites them that do fly:
All mischief that I had is but one woman,
And that one woman all mischance to me:
Who speaks worst of them, then's the best of men.
They are like shadows, mischiefs are like them.
Death fears me, for in troth I seek him out.
The sun is stale to me; to-morrow morn,
As this, 'twill rise, I see no difference:
The night doth visit me but in one robe,
She brings as many thoughts as she wears stars
When she is pleasant, but no rest at all.
For what new strange thing should I covet life, then?
Is not she false whom only I thought true?
Shail time to shew his strength make Scudmore live,
Till (perish the vicious thought) I love not thee,
Or thou, dear friend, remove thy heart from me?

Nevill. Time is as weak for that, as he is old.
Take comfort, and attend this council, friend:
This match is neither sacred nor sure;
Close fate annihilates what opinion makes,
And since she is resolved this night to die
If you do not redeem her, give the means,
Or her blood (credit me) will spring heavier griefs,
Sorer and stranger, in thy oppressed heart,
Than her false love before. Besides, 'tis you
My Scudmore, that are false, if you will not
Consent to let her make vows good, which were
But in a possibility to be broke.
This her repentance casts her vice quite off,

* This is the first line of *Scudmore's* answer; but in the old copy that, and the eighteen lines following it, are given to *Nevill*.

And if you leave her now, you take it on ;
 Nay, you incur a bloody mortal sin,
 You do become an actual murderer.
 If you neglect her, she will kill herself
 This night, by poison, knife, or other means.
 God gives you power to cross her desperate will,
 And if you save not where you may, you kill.

Scudmore. Why, can my noble and wise friend think
 still,

That what a woman says, her heart doth mean ?
 Can you believe that she will kill herself ?
 'Tis a full hour since she spake the word,
 And God forbid, that any woman's mind
 Should not be chang'd and chang'd in a long hour.
 She is by this time in her lordly arms,
 And, like pleas'd Juno clasp'd by Jupiter,
 Forgets the complaints of poor mortality :
 Such state, such pride, as poets shew her in,
 Incens'd with Jove's loose 'scapes upon the earth,
 She cast on me at our encountering.
 As cold and heavy, as a rock of ice,
 In her love to me, which while I there stayed,
 My bitter and hot words resolv'd* a little :
 Just as the sun doth ice I soften'd her,
 And made her drown her fault in her own tears.
 But think you she holds this flexible vein ?
 No ; I'm remov'd, and she's congeal'd again.

Nevill. How well does Scudmore speak ill for himself !

Wit's a disease that fit employment wants ;
 Therefore, we see those happiest in best parts,
 And under-born fortunes under their merits,

* *Resolv'd.*] See note to Hamlet, A. I., Sc. II., for a collection of instances in which *resolve* means *dissolve*. Probably the latest example is to be found in Pope's Homer :

" The phantom said, then vanish'd from his sight,
Resolves to air, and mixes with the night."

Iliad, Book II.

In some recent editions it has been thought an improvement to alter *resolves* to *dissolves*.

Grow to a sullen envy, hate, and scorn
Of their superiors ; and at last, like winds,
Break forth into rebellious civil wars,
Or private treasons : none so apt for these
As melancholy wits, fetter'd with need.
How free's the rustic swain from these assaults !
He never feels a passion all his life,
But when he cannot sleep, or hunger gripes ;
And though he want reason, wit, art, nay sense,
Is not so senseless to capitulate,
And ask God why he made not him as great
As that same foolish lord, or that rich knave ?
His brain with nothing does negotiate,
But his hard husbandry, which makes him live.
But have we worthy gifts, as judgment, learning,
Ingenious sharpness, (which wise God, indeed,
Doth seldom give out of his equal hand,
But join'd with poverty, to make it even
With riches, which he clogs with ignorance)
We vent our blessing in profane conceits,
Or in strong arguments against ourselves,
Foul bawdry, and stark blindly hold it best
Rather to lose a soul, than lose a jest.

Scudmore. Ill terms my friend this wit in any man ;
For that, but season'd with discretion,
Holds him in awe of all these blemishes,
Free's him of envy, doth philosophize
His spirit, that he makes no difference
'Twixt man and man, 'twixt fortunes high and low,
But as the thicker they with virtues grow.
Freedom and bondage wit can make all one ;
So 't would by being left, and being lov'd,
If I had any of it temper'd so.
But you have spoke all this, condemning me
For having wit to speak against myself,
But I'll be rul'd by you in all.

Nevill. Then thus.
To night, by promise, I do give a mask,
As to congratulate the bridal day,
In which the Count, Pendant, and the wise knight

Will be most worthy dancers : sir, you shall
Learn but my part, which I will teach you too,
As nimbly as the usher did teach me,
And follow my further directions.

'Though I, i'th' morn, were prodigious wight,
I'll give thee Bellafront in thine arms to night.

Scudmore. I am your property, my engineer.*

Prosper your purposes ! shine thou eye of heaven,
And make thy lowering morn a smiling even ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Enter CAPTAIN POUTS, with a letter, and STRANGE,
like a soldier.*

Strange. Oh, these are Lambeth fields.

Capt. Pouts. Strange murder'd on the wedding-day
by you,

At his own bride's appointment, for my sake ?

Strange. As dead as charity.

Capt. Pouts. This sounds not well.

Strange. 'Zoons ! you may say as well I am the man,
As doubt he lives. A plague of your belief !
D'ye know this bloody ruff, which she has sent
Lest you should be incredulous, and this ring
Which you have seen her wear.

Capt. Pouts. I know the ring,
And I have seen the ruff about his neck.
This comes of enforc'd marriages. Where was't done ?
And how escap'd you ?

Strange. Sir, receive it briefly.
I am her kinsman, and being newly come
Over, and not intending to stay long,
Took this day to go see my cousin Worldly,
(For so my name is) where I found all of them
So deeply drenched in the bridal cup,

* *Engineer.*] The old word for *Engineer* : so in Heywood's *Edward IV.* 1599, Part ii. Sign. M 3.

————— " But it was not you
At whom the fatal *engineer* did aim."

Ben Jonson uses it in his *Cataline*, Act III. Sc. IV.

" The *engineers* I told you of are working."

That sleep had ta'en possession of their eyes.
Bacchus had given them such an overthrow,
Their bodies lay like slaughtered carcasses ;
One here, one there, making such antic faces,
As drunkenness had mock'd at drunkenness.
In troth their postures, and their sleep, like death,
(For their's was liker death than sober sleep)
Remember'd me of body-scatter'd fields,
After the bloody battles I have seen.
'Twas such a season, to make short my tale,
As fate had said, " Now murders may be done
And ne'er reveal'd." Approaching further, I
Lighted upon a chamber, where your love
Sat by this merchant cast drunk on the bed.
She weeping and lamenting her mishap,
Assur'd both of my daring and my trust,
Fell flat upon the ground, then rais'd herself,
Hung on my neck, then sunk down to my legs,
Told all things past to-day, and never ceas'd,
Till I had ta'en life from that half dead man
Before, whom straight I strangled with this rope.

Capt. Pouts. You have shew'd some kindness to
me :

I must love you, sir. What did you with his body ?

Strange. Having first,
By her direction, put on these his clothes,
That like the murder'd man the safelier
I might pass with her, being her husband's shape,
If any of the servants had been wak'd,
She shew'd me to a necessary vault,
Within a closet in the chamber, too,
And there I threw the body.

Capt. Pouts. Whence this blood ?

Strange. That she herself first let out of his veins ;
Wherein she dipp'd the ruff about his neck,
And said, " Go bear this ensign of my love,
To assure him what I dar'd for his dear sake."

Capt. Pouts. Where is the maid ?

Strange. Captain, a maid for you,
But well you know (I hope) she is no maid :

But maid or no maid, she is at my mother's,
 Whence I will bring her whither you'll appoint
 To-night; and let this tide convey all hence,
 For staying will be something perilous.

Capt. Pouts. I will kill two men for you; till then
 I owe my life to you, and if ever racks,
 Strapadoes, wheel, or any torturous engine,
 Even from the Roman yoke, to the Scotch boot,*
 Force me discover you, or her, to law,
 Pray God the merchant may respire again.
 But what a villian have I been to wrong her!
 Did she not tell you how I injur'd her?

Strange. She said, you challeng'd her, and publicly
 Told you had lain with her; but truth's no wrong.

Capt. Pouts. Truth! 'twas more false than hell, and
 you shall see me,

(As well as I can repent of any sin)
 Ask her forgiveness for wounding of her name,
 And 'gainst the world recover her lost fame.
 Kind soul! would I could weep to make amends!
 Why, I did slander her at the church door.

Strange. The more base villain thou. [*Strike him.*]

Capt. Pouts. Ha! what's the news?

Strange. Thou unspeakable rascal! thou a soldier?
 A captain of the suburbs, a poor foist,†
 That with thy slops, and cat-a-mountain face,
 Thy bladder chops, and thy robustious words,
 Fright'st the poor whore, and terribly dost exact
 A weekly subsidy, twelve-pence a-piece,
 Whereon thou liv'st; and on my conscience,
 Thou snap'st, besides, with cheats and cut-purses.

Capt. Pouts. Heart! this is some railing poet. Why,
 you rogue!

Strange. Thou rogue far worse than rogues; thou
 slanderer!

* *Scotch Boot.*] See this instrument of torture explained in
 note 54 to Marston's *Malecontent*. D. O. P. iv. 53.

† *Foist.*] Dekker, in his *Bellman of London*, Sign. H 2, explains
foist to be a *pick-pocket*; and instances of the use of it in this sense,
 and as a *rogue* and *cheater*, may be found in many of our old writers.

Capt. Pouts. Thou worse than slanderous rogues;
thou murderer!

Strange. 'Tis well remember'd: I will cut thy throat,
To appease that merchant's soul, which ne'er will rest
Till some revenge be taken on thy tongue.

Capt. Pouts. I'll kill thee first, and in thy vital
flood
Wash my hands clean of that young merchant's blood.
[Fight.]

Strange. You fight as if you had fought afore.
I can still hold my sword: come on, sir.

Capt. Pouts. 'Zoons! can you ward so well? I think
you are
One of the noble science of defence.

Strange. True, o' th' science of noble defence I am,
That fight in safeguard of a virtuous name.

[Cedit Captain Pouts.]

Capt. Pouts. Oh! now I understand you, and you
stand over me. My hurts are not mortal, but you have
the better. If your name be Worldly, be thankful for
your fortune.

Strange. Give me thy sword, or I will kill thee.

Capt. Pouts. Some wiser than some: I love my re-
putation well, yet I am not so valiant an ass, but I love
my life better. There's my sword.

Strange. Then get upon my back: come, all shall
be well.

I'll carry thee unto a surgeon first,
And then unto thy wench. Come, we are friends.

Capt. Pouts. God-a-mercy. 'Zoons! methinks I see
myself in Moor-fields, upon a wooden leg, begging
threepence.*

Strange. I thank thee, heaven, for my success in
this.

To what perfection is my business grown!
Seldom or never is right overthrown.

[Exit with Captain Pouts on his back.]

* It will be recollected, that Brainworm in *Every Man in his Humour*, is represented upon a wooden leg, begging in Moor-fields like an old soldier.

Enter PENDANT, and MISTRESS WAGTAIL, with work, sewing a purse.

Pendant. They say every woman has a springe to catch a wood-cock : remember my instructions, and let me see what a paradise thou canst bring this fool into. Fifteen hundred a-year, wench, will make us all merry ; but a fool to boot ! why, we shall throw the house out at window. Let me see, there are two things in this foolish transitory world which should be altogether regarded, profit and pleasure ; or pleasure and profit : I know not which to place first, for, indeed, they are twins, and were born together. For profit, this marriage (God speed it) marries you to it ; and for pleasure, if I help you not to that as cheap as any man in England, call me cut.* And so remember my instructions, for I'll go fetch Sir Abraham. [*Erit.*

Wagtail. Your instructions ! Nay, faith, you shall see I have as fruitful a brain as a belly : you shall hear some additions of my own. My fantasy even kicks like my bastard : well, boy, for I know thou art masculine, neither thy father nor thy mother had any feminine quality but one, and that was to take a good thing when it was proffer'd. When thou inherit'st land, strange both to thy father and grandfather, and rid'st in a coach, it may be thy father, an old footman, will be running by thy side. But yonder comes the gentle knight, and my squire.

Enter SIR ABRAHAM and PENDANT, stealing.

Wagtail. Unfortunate damsel ! why do'st thou love Where thou hast sworn it never to reveal ?

May be he would vouchsafe to look on thee.

Because he is a knight, is it thy terror ?

Why, peradventure, he is Knight-hood's Mirror.

Pendant. D'ye hear, Sir Abraham ?

Abraham. Yes, with standing tears.

* This passage, among others, is quoted by Stevens, in a note to *Twelfth Night*, to shew that *cut*, which also means a *horse*, was employed as a term of abuse. In *Henry IV. Part I.* Falstaff, for the same purpose, uses *horse* as synonymous with *cut*: "Spit in my face, and call me *horse*."

Wagtail. Bevis* on Arundel with Morglay in hand,
Near to my knight in prowess doth not stand.
They say Sir Bevis slew both boar and dragon,
My knight for that can drink up a whole flaggon,
A thing as famous now amongst our men,
As killing monsters was accounted then.
'Tis not thy leg, no, were it twice as good,
Throws me into this melancholy mood ;
Yet let me say and swear, in a cross garter
Pauls never shew'd to eyes a lovelier quarter.

Abraham. I, but all this while she does not name
me : she may mean somebody else.

Pendant. Mean somebody else ! you shall hear her
name you by and by.

Wagtail. Courteous, Sir Abraham.

Pendant. Law ye, there !

Wagtail. Oh ! thy very name,
Like to a hatchet cleaves my heart in twain.
When first I saw thee in those little breeches,
I laugh'd for joy, but when I heard thy speeches
I smil'd downright, for I was almost frantic,
A modern knight should be so like an antic
In words and deeds. Those pinken-eyes† of thine,
For I shall ne'er be blest to call them mine——

Abraham. Say not so, sweetheart.

* She has just referred to the well-known work, *The Mirror of Knighthood* ; and by *Revis* she means Bevis of Hampton. *Arundel* was the name of his horse and *Morglay* of his sword. *Morglay* is often used for a sword in general.

† *Pinken-eyes.*] In the old copy it is printed *pinkanies*, and from what follows it seems, that the expression has reference to the redness of Sir Abraham's eyes from soreness. The following passage is to the same effect :

" 'Twould make a horse break his bridle to hear how the youth of the village will commend me : " Oh, the pretty little *pinkin* nyes of Mopsa ! " says one : " Oh, the fine flat lips of Mopsa ! " says another. *Day's Isle of Gulls*, 1606. Sign. D. 4.

Shakespeare (*Ant. & Cleop.* A. II. Sc. 7.) speaks of " plumpy Bacchus with *pink eyne* ; " and Lodge in *The Wounds of Civil War* (D. O. P. viii. 63.) has *pinkie mine*. In both these instances drinking is supposed to have occasioned the redness.

Wagtail. How they did run, not rheumatically run,
But round about the room, one over one!
That wide mouth? no, small: no, but middle-size,
That nose dominical, that head, like——wise.

Pendant. Very good: d'ye mark that head like-wise?

Abraham. She has an excellent wit.

Pendant. I'll now into her, sir: observe what follows. Now turtle, mourning still for the party? for whom are you working that purse?

Abraham. For me, I warrant her.

Wagtail. What news, good cousin? I hope you have not reveal'd my love.

Pendant. Yes, faith, I have acquainted the knight with all; and thou may'st be asham'd to abuse a gentleman so slanderously. He swears he ne'er lay with you.

Wagtail. Lay with me? alas, no, I say not so, nor no man living; but there was one night above the rest, that I dreamt he lay with me, and did you ne'er hear of a child begot in a dream.

Abraham. By this light, that very night I dreamt she lay with me.

Pendant. I, but Sir Abraham is no dreaming knight: in short, he contemns you, he scorns you at his heels.

Abraham. By God so he lies. I have the most ado to forbear, but that I would hear a little more.

Pendant. And has sent this halter. You may hang yourself, or you may cut your throat: here's a knife, too.

Wagtail. Well, I will love him in despite of all,
Howe'er he uses me! 'tis not the shame
Of being examin'd, or the fear of whipping—

Pendant. Make as if thou would'st kill thyself.

Wagtail. Should move me, would but he vouchsafe
his love.

Bear him this purse, fill'd with my latest breath.

[*Blows in it.*

I lov'd thee, Abraham Ninny, even in death.

[*Offers to stab.*

Abraham. Hold! hold! thy knight commands thee
for to hold.

I sent no halter. Poor soul, how it pants :
Take courage, look up.

Pendant. Look, Sir Abraham in person comes to
see you.

Wagtail. Oh, let me die, then, in his worship's arms!

Abraham. Live long and happy to produce thy
baby :

I am thy knight, and thou shalt be my lady.
Frown dad, fret mother, so my love look cheerly :
Thou hast my heart, and thou hast bought it dearly ;
And for your pains, if Abraham live to inherit,
He will not be unmindful of your merit.
Wear thou this ring, whilst I thy labours task.
This purse wear in my cap, anon i'th' mask.

Wagtail. Oh happy woman !

Abraham. To supper let's, and merry be as may be.

Pendant. Now, God send every wise knight such
a lady. [Exeunt.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter BELLAFRONT.

Bellafront. Titles and state d'ye call it? Oh, content !

Thou art both beauty, means, and all in marriage.
Joy dwells not in the prince's palaces :
They that envy 'em do not know their cares.
Were I the queen of gold, it could not buy
An hour's ease for my oppressed heart.
Oh, were this wedlock knot to tie again,
Not all the state and glory it contains,
Join'd with my father's fury, should enforce
My rash consent ! but Scudmore, thou shalt see,
This false heart (in my death) most true to thee.

[Shews a knife hanging by her side.]

My lord, my father, all the company
Did note my sudden sadness now at supper,
Yet came I out, and put on feigned mirth,

And mean to sit out this night's revels, too,
 To avoid all suspect may grow in 'em,
 Lest my behaviour should my intent reveal :
 Our griefs, like love, we hardly can conceal.*
 Yon come my sisters. Are the maskers ready ?

Enter LUCIDA with her willow garland on, and KATHERINE.

Lucida. They are gone to dress themselves. Mr. Nevill's come.

I would I had not vow'd to live a maid !
 I am a little taken with that gentleman,
 And yet if marriage be so full of ill,
 Let me be married to my garland still.

Katherine. In troth, thy state is happier much than ours.

Were never two like us unfortunate !

Lucida. Thy case, indeed, I needs must pity much,
 Because I think thy virtue slandered ;
 But for my lady sister, if she reap
 Sad discontent, 'tis none's but her own fault :
 I knew the passages 'twixt her and Scudmore.

Bellafront. Sister, I wonder you will name a man,
 I think not on : he was no match for me.
 Why d'ye blame me, that should rather blame
 Your wandering eye, to love a man lov'd me ?

Lucida. Well, 'tis too late now to expostulate.
 But, my poor little Kate, where is thy man ?

Katherine. Lost, lost in troth : to-morrow I shall hear,

I make account, he's gone some five year's voyage,
 Till this disgrace of ours be over-blown ;

* The difficulty of concealing love has been the origin of a humorous proverb in Italian. In Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, IV : 88, Rinaldo thus taunts the most sentimental of the Paladins—Oliver, when he becomes enamoured of Florisena—

——— *Vero è ver che l'uom non possa*

Celar per certo l'amore e la tossa.

Franco Sacchetti in his 16th Novel expressly tells us that it was a proverb. *Perchè ben dice il proverbio, che l'amore e la tossa non si puo celare mai.*

And for my Captain Pouts, by this time he
Is ten mile on the river toward Gravesend.

*Enter SIR JOHN WORDLY, with SERVANTS with
torches and cudgels.*

Sir John Wordly. Stand you two there. Sirrah,
go you with me.

Why how now, girls! here still? what, and your lady-
ship?

Away! away, I say: go take your places.

Some torches for my lady! You, sirrah,

[Exeunt Bellafront, Lucida, Kate.

*Is my Lady Ninny awake yet?**

Servant. Yes, sir, she is awake, but she is scant
sober: the first thing she call'd for was her aqua-vita
bottle.

Sir John Wordly. Who is with her?

Servant. The good Sir Innocent, and her gentle-
woman.

Sir John Wordly. Go, tell 'em I desire their com-
pany,

The mask stays on 'em say; and d'ye hear,
The sides of one o' th' chairs must be let out
For her great ladyship.

Servant. Marry shall it, sir.

[Exit Servant.

*Enter NEVILL, COUNT, PENDANT, and SIR ABRA-
HAM, in their masking robes; SIR ABRAHAM gnaw-
ing on a capon's leg.*

Nevill. Soul! man, leave eating now: look, look,
you have all dropt o' your suit.

Abraham. Oh, sir, I was in love to day, and could
not eat; but here's one knows the case is alter'd. Lend
me but a handkerchief to wipe my mouth, and I ha'
done.

Nevill. Soul! how this rascal stays with the rest of
our things.

* The question

“ You, sirrah,

Is my Lady Ninny awake yet?”

is given in the old 4to. to Scudmore, but it belongs to Sir John
Worldly. Scudmore is not on the stage.

Sir John Wordly. How now, son Count? what, ready Mr. Nevill?

Nevill. All ready, ready; only we tarry for our vizards and our caps: I put 'em to a knave to doing, because I would have 'em the better done.

Abraham. If you put 'em to a knave, you are like to have 'em the worse done.

Nevill. Your wit is most active: I call'd him knave in regard of his long stay, sir, not his work.

Abraham. But d'ye hear, Master Nevill; did you bespeak a vizard with a most terrible countenance for me?

Nevill. A very devil's face: I fear nothing, but that it will fright the women.

Abraham. I would it would. And a huge moustachios?

Nevill. A very Turk's.

Abraham. Excellent!

Count Frederick. But do you think he will come at all?

Omnes. Oh! there he is.

Scudmore. (*within*) By your leave! stand back, by your leave!

Enter SCUDMORE, like a vizard-maker.

Nothing can be done to night, if I enter not.

Second Servant. Stand back there, or I'll burn you.

Scudmore. 'Twere but a whorish trick, sir.

Third Servant. Oh, sir, is't you? Heart, you will be kill'd!

Scudmore. Marry, God forbid sir.

Nevill. Pray forbear, let me speak to him.

Oh, you use us very well.

Scudmore. In good faith, I have been so troubled about this gentleman's scurvy face (I take it) 'tis wonderful.

Abraham. Well, are you fitted now?

Nevill. Fitted at all points.

Count Frederick. Where are the caps?

Scudmore. Here, sir?

Pendant. Let me see mine.

Count Frederick. Come, help me on with mine.

Abraham. This is a rare face to fright the maids i'th' country! Here now I'll pin my purse. Come help me on.

Nevill. So, so, away! mine being on, I'll follow you.

Omnes. Pray make haste.

[*Exeunt Sir John Wordly, Sir Abraham, Count, Pendant.*]

Nevill. So, that door's fast, and they are busied About their charge. On with this robe of mine, This vizard and this cap: help me a little.

[*Change habits.*]

Scudmore. At first change I must tell her who I am.

Nevill. Right; 'tis agreed, I (leading of the mask,) should dance with Bellafront.

Scudmore. And at the second, I come away with her and leave them dancing, and shall find you at the back door.

Nevill. The rest

That follows is digested in my breast.

Servant. What would you do? stand back, Unless you can eat torches!

*Enter COUNT, PENDANT, SIR ABRAHAM, in their
masking robes.*

Count Frederick. Come, come! away for shame!

Scudmore. 'Tis such a tedious rascal. So, ha' wi' ye.
[*Exeunt maskers.*]

Sir John Worldly. Thou hast well fitted 'em, though thou mad'st 'em stay.

Nevill. I forbid any man to mend 'em, sir. Good night unto your worship.

Sir John Worldly. Wilt not stay?

Nevill. Alas, sir, I have another to set forth This very night. By your leave, my masters.

[*Exit Nevill through them.*]

Second Servant. By your leave! by your leave! you'll let a man go out?

Sir John Worldly. Now, go with me, and let all in that will.

[*Exit Sir John Worldly with them, and run in three or four.*]

SCENE II.

Enter Two or three, setting three or four chairs, and four or five stools. Loud music ; in which time enter SIR JOHN WORLDLY, SIR INNOCENT, BELLA-FRONT, LUCIDA, KATE, my LADY NINNY, MRS. WAGTAIL. They seat themselves : LADY NINNY offers at two or three chairs ; at last finds the great one : they point at her, and laugh. As soon, as she is set, she drinks of her bottle. The music plays, and they enter.

After one strain of the music, SCUDMORE takes BELLA-FRONT, who seems unwilling to dance ; COUNT takes LUCIDA ; PENDANT KATE ; SIR ABRAHAM MISTRESS WAGTAIL : SCUDMORE as they stand (the other courting, too), whispers as follows.

Scudmore. I am your Scudmore.. [*Soft music.*

Bellafront. Ha !

Scudmore. By heaven, I am.

Be rul'd by me in all things.

Bellafront. Even to death.

Abraham. S'foot ! did you not know me by my purse ?

Wagtail. I should ne'er have known you by that, for you wear it on your head, and other folks in their pockets.

Lady Ninny. Which is my lord, I pray ?

Sir John Worldly. The second man :

Young Nevill leads.

Sir Innocent. And where's Sir Abraham ?

Sir John Worldly. He with the terrible visage.

Lady Ninny. Now, out upon him to disfigure himself so :

And 'twere not for my bottle, I should swoon.

[*Music, and they dance the second strain, in which*

Scudmore goes away with Bellafront.

Omnes Spectatores. Good, very good !

[*The other four dance another strain, honor, and end.*

Count Frederick. But where's the bride, and Nevill ?

Omnes. Ha !

Abraham. 'Ware tricks.

Sir John Worldly. Oh, there they come: it was their parts to do so.

Enter SCUDMORE unvizarded, BELLAFRONT, with pistols, and the right Parson.

Count Frederick. This Nevill? this is Scudmore. Omnes. How?

Count Frederick. But here's my lady.

Scudmore. No; my gentlewoman.

Abraham. 'Zoons! treason! I smell powder.

Bellafront. In short know,
That I am married to this gentleman,
To whom I was contracted long ago.
This priest the inviolable knot hath tied.
What ease I find being unladified!

Count Frederick. What riddle's this?

Sir Innocent. Ware the last statute of two husbands.

Scudmore and Bellafront. Pish!

Count Frederick. This is the very priest that married me:

Is it not sister?

Enter NEVILL like the Parson, too.

Nevill. No.

Abraham. Lord bless us! here is conjuring!
Lend me your aqua-vitæ bottle, good mother.

Sir John Worldly. Hey-day!
The world's turn'd upside down. I have heard, and seen
Two or three benefices to one priest, or more,
But two priests to one benefice, ne'er before.

Pendant. Married not you the earl?

Parson. Bona fide, no.

Sir John Worldly. You did then?

Nevill. Yes.

Count Frederick. I have the privilege then.

Sir John Worldly. Right, you were married first.

Scudmore. Sir John, you doat,
This is a devil in a parson's coat.

[Nevill puts off the Priest's weeds, and has a devil's robe under.]

Omnes. A pretty emblem!

Nevill. Who married her, or would have caus'd
her marry

To any man but this, no better was,
Let circumstances be examined.
Yet here's one more : and now I hope you all,
Perceive my marrying not canonical.

[Slips off his devil's weeds.]

Omnes. Nevill! whoop!

Count Frederick. Heart! what a deal of knavery a priest's cloak can hide. If it be not one of the honestest, friendliest cozenages that 'ere I saw, I am no lord.

Katherine. Life! I am not married then in earnest.

Nevill. So, Mistress Kate, I kept you for myself.

Sir John Worldly. It boots not to be angry.

Sir Innocent and Lady.—No, faith, Sir John.

Enter STRANGE, with CAPTAIN POUTS on his back.

Second Servant. Whither will you go with your calf on your back, sir?

Sir John Worldly. Now, more knavery yet?

Strange. Prithee forbear, or I shall do thee mischief. By your leave, here's some sad to your merriment. Know you this captain?

Omnes. Yes, very well.

Katherine. Oh sister, here's the villain slander'd me.

Strange. You see he cannot stand to't.

Abraham. Is he hurt in the arm, too?

Strange. Yes.

Abraham. Why then, by God's-lid, thou art a base rogue. I knew I should live to tell thee so.

Lady Ninny. Sir Abraham, I say.

Omnes. Heaven is just.

Capt. Pouts. What a rogue are you! is this the surgeon you would carry me to?

Strange. Confess your slander, and I will, I swear.

Capt. Pouts. Nay, 'tis no matter, I'll cry quittance with you.

Forgive me, Mistress Kate, and know all people
I lied not with her, but belied her once;
And to my recantation, that same soldier
Enforc'd my hand.

Strange. Yes, here 'tis, Mistress Kate.

[They all look on the paper.]

Capt. Pouts. I see now how I am cheated. Love him well ;

He has redeem'd your honour with his sword.

Sir John Worldly. But where is Strange, my son? oh, were he here,

He should be married new to make all sure.

Katherine. Oh, my divining spirit, he's gone to sea!

Capt. Pouts. This cunning in her is exceeding good. Your son, your husband, Strange, is murdered.

Omnes. How ?

Strange. Peace, peace! for heaven's sake peace!

Come, sir, I'll carry you to a surgeon.

Here's gold to stop thy throat : for God's sake peace!

Capt. Pouts. Sirrah, you have brought me to a surgeon already :

I'll be even with you.

Katherine. Of all men living I could marry thee, Were not my heart given to another man.

Sir, you did speak of Strange.

Capt. Pouts. These women are as crafty as the devil. Yes, I did speak of him : Sir John, my lord, Know, Strange is murder'd by that villain's hand, And by his wife's consent.

Omnes. How ?

Sir John Worldly. God forbid.

Capt. Pouts. Search presently the closet and the vault,

There you shall find his body : 'tis too true.

The reason all may guess : her husband wanting

Spirit to do on me what he hath done,

In hope to marry her, he hath murder'd him.

Katherine. To marry me ! no, villain : I do hate him On this report, worse than I do thyself ;

And may the plagues and tortures of a land

Seize me, if this be not an innocent hand.

Sir John Worldly. 'Fore God 'tis most like truth.

Son, Scudmore, pray

Look to this fellow : gentlemen assist.

Torches ! some torches ! I'll go search myself.

Sir Innocent Ninny. I will assist you.

Count Frederick. But I pray, sir, how came you unto this knowledge?

Capt. Pouts. From his mouth.

Strange. I'll save your labour, and discover all.
Thou perjur'd villain, did'st not swear thou would'st not

Discover me?

Capt. Pouts. I but swore in jest.

Strange. Nay, but remember, thou did'st wish
Strange living?

If ever thou did'st tell. Sir, all is true,
And would my punishment would ease my conscience.

Sir John Worldly. To Newgate with him! hence!
take her along.

Out murderers! whore, thou art no child of mine!

Fetch constable and officers. Away!

Strange. Sir, do but hear me speak.

Sir John Worldly. Fetch officers!

Capt. Pouts. Go fetch a surgeon.

Strange. Sir, you are then too violent. I will bail
her. [Discovers himself.

Katherine. Oh, my dear Strange!

Sir John Worldly. My son!

Scudmore, Lucida, Bellafront. Brother!

Omnes. Young Strange!

Capt. Pouts. Heart! I was never sick before: help
me now to a surgeon, or I shall swoon instantly.

[As two lead him he speaks.

Thou wert born a woman-citizen; fare thee well,

And farewell love, and women, ye diseases:

My horse and sword shall be my mistresses,

My horse I'll court, my sword shall lie with me. [Exit.

Strange. The way to cure lust is to bleed, I see.

Count Frederick. Tell him all Scudmore, whilst I go
a-wooing again. Sir John, will you go along, and my
two worshipful elders, I pray be your witnesses. Priest
go not you away. Heart! I have so ruminated on a wife,
that I must have one this night, or I shall run proud.

[*Nevill, Scudmore, Bellafront, Strange, Katherine, whisper in one part. Pendant, Sir Abraham, and Wagtail, in another.*]

Mistress Lucida, you did once love me; if you do still, no more words, but give me your hand. Why are ye doubtful?

Abraham. Ne'er look upon me, Mistress Lucida: time was, time is, and time's past. I'll none of you now; I am otherwise provided.

Pendant. Well spoken, brazen-head!* now or never, Sir Abraham.

Abraham. Then first as duty binds, I crave consent Of my two parents dear: if I, say so; If not, I'll ha' her, whether you will or no.

Sir Innocent. How? how?

Lady Ninny. I hope you will not.

Abraham. Ma'am, I am resolv'd: you have a humour of your aqua-vitæ bottle, why should not I have a humour in a wife?

Sir John Worldly. An old man were a fitter match for her:

He would make much of her.

Abraham. Much on her? I know not what ye call much making on her, I am sure I have made two on her.

Pendant. And that an old man cannot do, I hope.

Nevill. Oh thou beyond Lawrence of Lancashire.†

Sir Innocent. Come, come; you shall not.

Abraham. Speak not in vain; I am too sure to change, For hand and heart are sure: *Ecce signum.* And this have I done, and never lay with her.

* An allusion to the well known story of Friar Bacon and his brazen head which spoke three times, but was not attended by his man Miles. See Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, reprinted in the new edit. of D. O. P. viii. 223.

† A boisterous clowish character in the play of *The Lancashire Witches*, by Heywood and Brome. It was not printed until 1634. Either Lawrence was a person who figured in that transaction and whose name is not recorded, or which is not impossible, the play was written very long before it was printed.

Sir John Worldly. Nay, then 'tis too late ;
'Tis sure : 'tis vain to cross the will of fate.

Sir Innocent and Lady. Well, well, God bless you.
[*Abraham and Wagtail kneel.*

Abraham. Thanks reverend couple, and God bless,
withal,
The little Ninny that herein doth sprawl.
Parson, you shall dispatch us presently :
Lord ! how soberly you stand.

Parson. Now, truly, I could ne'er stand drunk in
my life.

Strange. Strange and most fortunate, we must have
a new tuck then.

Count Frederick. Is it a match ?

Lucida. 'Tis done.

Count Frederick. Then Bacchus squeeze grapes with
a plenteous hand.

Parson, you'll take some pains with us to-night.
Come, brothers, come : fly willow to the woods,
And like the sea, for healths let's drink whole floods.

Strange. I consecrate my deed unto the city,
And hope to live myself to see the day,
It shall be shewn to people in a play.

Scudmore. And may all true love have like happy
end.

Women, forgive me ; men, admire my friend.

Sir John Worldly. On, Parson, on, and, boy, out-
voice the music.*

Ne'er was so much (what cannot heavenly powers,)
Done, and undone, and done in twelve short hours.

[*Exeunt.*

* *Out-voice the music.*] Perhaps the play originally ended with
a song by a boy, in which the rest joined chorus.

EDITION.

A Woman is a Weather-cocke. A New Comedy, as it was acted before the King in White-Hall. And divers times privately at the White-Friers, by the Children of her Majesties Revels.—Written by Nat. Field. —*Si natura negat, facit indignatio versum.* Printed at London, for John Budge, and are to be sold at the great south doore of Paules, and at Brittaines Bursse. 1612.

7 LVJ.
Amends for Ladies.

A COMEDY,

BY

NATHANIEL FIELD.

WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS AND NOTES

BY

J. PAYNE COLLIER, ESQ.

LONDON:

SEPTIMUS PROWETT.

1829.

Thomas White, Printer,
Johnson's Court.

AMENDS FOR LADIES.

THIS excellent old comedy seems to have been deservedly popular on its performance, by two different companies, at the Black Friars Theatre before 1618, and it was twice printed. It is not easy to decide whether the comic or the serious scenes are the best; although the first are not without some of the coarseness which belonged to the manners of the age. The language is generally well chosen : some passages are of the higher order of poetry, and from them we may judge that Field was capable of writing other parts of *The Fatal Dowry* than those which Mr. Gifford, in his just admiration of Massinger, was willing to assign to him. The characters are numerous, varied, and well distinguished.

The object of the play was to vindicate the female sex, attacked in *Woman is a Weathercock* ; and it is accomplished amply and happily in the persons of the Maid, Wife and Widow. The plot is threefold, applying to each of them, but the incidents are interwoven with ingenuity, and concluded without confusion. In several of our old plays, husbands become, or endeavour to become, the instruments of the dishonour of their wives. Middleton was too fond of incidents of this odious kind, which are to be found in his *Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, 1630, and in *Anything for a quiet Life*, 1662 ; but in both cases the purpose of the husband was to profit by his own disgrace. In Field's *Amends for Ladies*, the husband only resorts to this expedient to put his wife's fidelity to the test. This portion of the plot was borrowed, in several of its preliminary circumstances, from the novel of the *Curioso Impertinente* in Don Quixotte ; but it would not have accorded with Field's design, of making amends to the fair sex, that Subtle should have met with the same success as Lothario. The attempt of Bold, in disguise, upon the widow, was taken from an

incident apparently well known about the date when the play was written, and referred to in it. The original of that part of the comedy which relates to Ingen and the Lady Honor has not been found, and perhaps it was the invention of the poet.

The two editions of this play in 1618 and 1639, do not materially vary, although the difference between the title-pages might lead to the supposition that "the merry pranks of Moll Cut-purse," and the "humour of roaring," were new in the later copy. It seldom happens that faith is to be put in attractive changes of title-pages. Middleton and Rowley's *Fair Quarrel* is, indeed, an instance to the contrary; for the edition of 1622 contains a good deal of curious matter connected with the manners of the times, promised in "the fore-front of the book," and not found in the copy of 1617. In *Amends for Ladies* Moll Cut-purse only appears in one scene. The variations between the impressions are errors of the press, some of which are important of their kind, and such as rendered a careful collation absolutely necessary.

It may here, perhaps, be worth while to place in one view the scanty and scattered information regarding Mary Frith, *alias* Moll Cut-purse, the Roaring Girl. She was a woman who commonly dressed like a man, and challenged several male opponents, bearing, during her life, the character of a bully, a thief, a bawd, a receiver of stolen goods, &c.* She appears to have been the daughter of a shoe-maker, born in 1584, dead in 1659, and buried in what is now called St. Bride's Church. In Feb. 1611-12, she did penance at Pauls' Cross, but the letter mentioning this fact, which is in the British Museum, does not state for what offence.

* She is the "honest Moll" alluded to by City-wit in R. Brome's *Court Beggar*, A. ii. S. 1. to whom he is to go for the recovery of his purse, after he had had his pocket picked while looking at the news in the window of "the *Coranto* shop."—He afterwards states that she "deals in private for the recovery of such goods."

Among other daring exploits, she robbed, or assisted in robbing, General Fairfax, on Hounslow Heath, for which she was sent to Newgate, but afterwards liberated without trial. The immediate cause of her death was a dropsy, and she seems then to have been possessed of property: she lived in her own house in Fleet Street, next the Globe Tavern, and left £20. that the conduit might run wine on the expected return of Charles II. Besides the comedy by Middleton and Dekker, (Dodsley's Old Plays, VI.) John Day wrote "a book of the mad pranks of Merry Moll of the Bankside." It was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1610, and perhaps the play of which she is the heroine, was founded upon it. Another account of her life was printed in 1662 shortly after her decease. She is supposed to be alluded to by Shakespeare in *Twelfth Night*, A. i. S. 3. and obtained such "bad eminence," in point of notoriety, that it is not surprising, (according to the evidence of the authors of *The Witch of Edmonton*, A. v. Sc. 1.) that some of the dogs at Paris Garden, used in baiting bulls and bears, were named after her.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.*

- COUNT, *Father of Lord Feesimple.*
- LORD FEESIMPLE.
- LORD PROUDLY.
- SIR JOHN LOVALL, *called Husband.*
- SUBTLE, *his Friend.*
- INGEN, *in love with Lady Honor.*
- FRANK, *his younger Brother.*
- BOLD, *in love with Lady Bright.*
- WELLTRIED, *his Friend.*
- SELDOM, *a Citizen.*
- WHOREBANG, }
 —BOTS, } *Roarers.*
 —TEARCHAPS, }
 —SPILLBLOOD, }
- PITTS, } *Serjeants.*
 —DONNER, }
- Page, —Drawer, &c.
- LADY HONOR, }
 —LADY PERFECT. } *called* { *Maid.*
 —LADY BRIGHT, } { *Wife.*
 —GRACE SELDOM. } { *Widow.*
- MOLL CUT-PURSE.

* Neither of the old editions has a list of characters prefixed

AMENDS FOR LADIES.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Enter the LADY HONOR, *the* LADY PERFECT, *the*
LADY BRIGHT.

*Maid.** A wife the happiest state? It cannot be.

Wife. Yes, such a wife as I, that have a man
As if myself had made him: such a one
As I may justly say, I am the rib
Belonging to his breast. Widow, and Maid,
Your lives compar'd to mine are miserable,
Though wealth and beauty meet in each of you.
Poor virgin, all thy sport is thought of love,
And meditation of a man; the time
And circumstance ere thou canst fix thy thoughts
On one thy fancy will approve.

Maid. That trouble
Already may be past.

Wife. Why if it be,
The doubt he will not hold his brittle faith,
That he is not a competible choice,
And so your noble friends will cross the match,
Doth make your happiness uncertain still;
Or say you married him, what he would prove.
Can you compare your state, then, to a wife?

Maid. Nay, all the freedom that a virgin hath
Is much to be preferr'd. Who would endure
The humours of so insolent† a thing

* The Lady Honor is called *Maid*, the Lady Perfect *Wife*, and the Lady Bright, *Widow*.

† The 2nd Edition reads *excellent* for *insolent*.

As is a husband ? Which of all the herd
Runs not possess'd with some notorious vice,
Drinking or whoring, fighting, jealousy,
Even of a page at twelve, or of a groom
That rubs horse-heels ? Is it not daily seen,
Men take wives but to dress their meat, to wash
And starch their linen : for the other matter
Of lying with them, that's but when they please :
And whatsoe'er the joy be of the bed,
The pangs that follow procreation
Are hideous, or you wives have gull'd your husbands
With your loud shriekings, and your deathful throes.
A wife or widow to a virgin's life !

Widow. Why should the best of you think ye enjoy
The rest and rule, that a free widow doth ?
I am mine own commander, and the bliss
Of wooers, and of each variety
Frequents me, as I were a maid. No brother
Have I to dice my patrimony away, as you,
My maiden madam, may. No husband's death
Stand I in doubt on ; for thanks be to Heaven,
If mine were good, the grievous loss of him
Is not to come ; if he were bad, he's gone,
And I no more embrace my injury.
But be yours ill, you nightly clasp your hate ;
Or good, why he may die, or change his virtue.
And thou, though single, hast a bed-fellow
As bad as the worst husband—thought of one ;
And what that is, men with their wives do do,
And long expectance till the deed be done.
A wife is like a garment us'd and torn :
A maid like one made up but never worn.

Maid. A widow is a garment worn thread-bare,
Selling at second-hand like broker's ware.
But let us speak of things the present time
Makes happy to us, and see what is best.
I have a servant, then, the crown of men,
The fountain of humanity, the prize

Of every virtue, moral and divine ;
Young, valiant, learned, well-born, rich, and shap'd
As if wise Nature, when she fashion'd him,
Had meant to give him nothing but his form ;
Yet all additions are conferr'd on him,
That may delight a woman : this same youth
To me hath sacrific'd his heart, yet I
Have check'd his suit, laugh'd at his worthy service,
Made him the exercise of my cruelty,
Whilst constant as the sun, for all these clouds,
His love goes on.

Enter INGEN.

Widow. Peace, here's the man you name.

Wife. Widow, we'll stand aside.

Ingen. Good morrow to the glory of our age,
The Lady Perfect, and the Lady Bright,

[Meeting the Wife and Widow.]*

The virtuous wife, and widow; but to you,
The Lady Honor, and my mistress,
The happiness of your wishes.

Maid. By this light,
I never heard one speak so scurvily,
Utter such stale wit, and pronounce so ill.
“ But to you my Lady Honor, and my mistress,
The happiness of your wishes.”

Ingen. Stop your wit ;
You would fain shew these ladies, what a hand
You hold over your servant : 't shall not need ;
I will express your tyranny well enough.
I have lov'd this lady since I was a child,
Since I could construe *Amo* : now she says
I do not love her, 'cause I do not weep,
Lay mine arms o'er my heart, and wear no garters,
Walk with mine eyes in my hat, sigh, and make faces
For all the poets in the town to laugh at.
Pox o' this howling love ! 'tis like a dog
Shut out at midnight. Must love needs be powder'd,

* They retire soon afterwards, but the *exit* is not marked.

Lie steep'd in brine, or will it not keep sweet?
Is it like beef in summer?

Maid. Did you ever
Hear one talk fustian like a butcher, thus?

Ingen. 'Tis foolish, this same telling folks we love:
It needs no words, 'twill shew itself in deeds;
And did I take you for an entertainer,
A lady that will wring one by the finger,
Whilst on another's toes she treads, and cries
"By gad, I love but one, and you are he,"
Either of them thinking himself the man,
I'd tell you in your ear, put for the business,
Which granted or denied, "madam, God be w' ye."

Maid. Come, these are daily slanders that you
raise
On our infirm and unresisting sex:
You never met, I'm sure, with such a lady.

Ingen. Oh, many by this light. I've seen a chamber
Frequented like an office of the law,
Clients succeed at midnight one another,
Whilst the poor madam hath been so distress'd
Which of her lovers to shew most countenance to,
That her dull husband has perceiv'd her wiles.

Maid. Nay, perhaps, taught her: many of those
husbands
Are base enough to live upon't.

Ingen. I have seen another of 'em
Cheat, by this light, at cards, and set her women
To talk to the gentleman that play'd,
That, so distracted, they might oversee.

Maid. Oh, fie upon ye! I dare swear you lie.

Ingen. Do not, fair mistress; you will be forsworn.

Maid. You men are all foul-mouth'd: I warrant, you
Talk thus of me and other ladies here,
Because we keep the city.

Ingen. Oh, profane!
That thought would damn me. Will you marry yet?

Maid. No, I will never marry.

Ingen. Shall we, then,

Couple unlawfully? for, indeed, this marrying
Is but proclaiming what we mean to do;
Which may be done privately, in civil sort,
And none the wiser; and by this white hand,
The rack, strapado, or the boiling boot,*
Should never force me tell to wrong your honor.

Maid. May I believe this?

Ingen. Let it be your creed.

Maid. But if you should prove false.—Nay, ne'er
unhang

Your sword, except you mean to hang yourself.
Why where have you been drinking? 'sfoot you talk
Like one of these same rambling boys, that reign
In Turnbull street.†

Ingen. How do you know?

Maid. Indeed, my knowledge is but speculative,
Not practic there; I have it by relation,
From such observers as yourself, dear servant.
I must profess I did think well of thee,
But get thee from my sight, I never more
Will hear or see thee, but will hate thee deadly,
As a man enemy, or a woman turn'd.
Ladies come forth.

Enter WIDOW, WIFE.

See, sir, what courtesy
You have done to me: a strange praise of you
Had newly left my lips just as you enter'd,

* In his *Woman is a Weathercock* Field has already mentioned these instruments of torture in conjunction with some others, and to a similar import: what he here calls "the boiling boot" he there terms "the Scotch boot," but they were probably the same thing, in the one case, hot oil, or water, supplying the place of wedges in the latter instance.

† *Turnbull* street was sometimes spelt *Turnball* street, and sometimes (as Field himself gives it in another part of this play) *Turnbole* street. It was situated between Cow-Cross and Clerkenwell Green, and is celebrated by many of our old dramatists (quotations from whose works upon this point may be seen in D. O. P. ix. 208) as the residence of ruffians, thieves, and prostitutes. Its proper name was *Turnmill* street. See *Stow's Survey*, 1599, p. 12.

And how you have deserv'd it with your carriage !
 Villain ! thou hast hurt mine honor to these friends,
 For what can they imagine but some ill
 Hath past betwixt us by thy broad discourse ?
 Were my case theirs, by virgin chastity,
 I should condemn them. Hence ! depart my sight !

Ingen. Madam, but hear me. Oh, that these were
 men,

And durst but say, or think you ill for ~~this~~ !
 I have so good a cause upon my side
 That I would cut their hearts out of their breasts,
 And the thoughts out of them, that injur'd you.
 But I obey your hest, and for my penance
 Will run a course never to see you more :
 And now I lose you, may I lose the light,
 Since in that beauty dwelt my day or night.

[*Exit Ingen.*]

Widow. Is this the virtuous youth ?

Wife. Your happiness ?

Widow. Wherein you thought your seat so far^e
 'bove ours.

Maid. If one man could be good, this had been he.
 See, here come all your suitors, and your husband ;
 And, room for laughter, here's the lord Feesimple.
 What gentlewoman does he bring along ?

*Enter HUSBAND, embracing SUBTLE ; the Lord FEE-
 SIMPLE, with young BOLD like a waiting gentle-
 woman, and WELLTRIED.—WELLTRIED, HUS-
 BAND, SUBTLE, talk with WIFE.*

Feesimple. One and thirty good-morrows to the
 fairest, wisest, richest widow, that ever conversation
 coped withal.

Widow. Three score and two unto the wisest lord,
 That ever was train'd in university.

* The later copy spoils the measure by omitting the words *so far*.

Feesimple. Oh, courteous, bounteous Widow! she has outbid me thirty-one good-morrows at a clap.

Welltried. But, my lord Feesimple, you forget the business impos'd on you.

Feesimple. Gentlewoman, I cry thee mercy; but 'tis a fault in all lords, not in me only: we do use to swear by our honors, and as we are noble, to dispatch such a business for such a gentleman, and we are bound, even by the same honors we swear by, to forget it in a quarter of an hour, and look as if we had never seen the party when we meet next, especially if none of our gentlemen have been considered.

Welltried. I, but all yours have, for you keep none, my lord: besides, though it stands with your honor to forget men's businesses, yet it stands not with your honor, if you do not do a woman's.

Feesimple. Why then, madam, so it is that I request your ladyship to accept into your service this gentlewoman. For her truth and honesty I will be bound; I have known her too long to be deceived. This is the second time I have seen her.

Maid. Why how now, my lord! a preferrer of gentlewomen to service, like an old knitting woman? where hath she dwelt before?

Feesimple. She dwelt with young Bold's sister, he that is my cor rival in your love. She requested me to advance her to you, for you are a dubb'd lady; so is not she yet.

Welltried. But now you talk of young Bold, when did you see him, lady?

Widow. Not this month, master Welltried. I did conjure him to forbear my sight; Indeed, swore if he came I'd be denied.

But 'tis strange you should ask for him: ye two Were wont never to be asunder.

Welltried. Faith, madam, we never were together, but We differ'd on some argument or other;

And doubting lest our discord might at length
Breed to some quarrel, I forbear him too.

Feesimple. He quarrel? Bold? hang him, if he
durst have quarrel'd, the world knows he's within a
mile of an oak has put him too't, and soundly. I never
car'd for him in my life, but to see his sister: he's
an ass, pox! an errant ass; for do you think any
but an arrant ass would offer to come a wooing, where
a lord attempts? he quarrel! he dares not quarrel.

Welltried. But he dares fight, my lord, upon my
knowledge:

And rail no more, my lord, behind his back,
For if you do, my lord, blood must ensue. [Draws.]

Feesimple. Oh, oh! my honor dies! I am dead.

[Swoons.]
Welltried. Ud'slight what's the matter? wring him
by the nose.

Widow. A pair of riding spurs, now, were worth gold.

Maid. Pins are as good. Prick him, prick him.

Feesimple. Oh, oh!

Wife. He's come again. Lift him up.

Omnes. How fares your lordship?

Feesimple. Oh friends, you have wrong'd my spirit
to call it back:

I was ev'n in Elizium at rest.

Welltried. But why, sir, did you swoon?

Feesimple. Well though I die, mister Welltried,
before all these I do forgive you, because you were
ignorant of my infirmity. Oh, sir! is't not up yet? I die
again! Put up, now, whilst I wink, or I do wink for
ever.

Welltried. 'Tis up, my lord; ope your eyes: but I
pray tell me, is this antipathy twixt bright steel and
you natural, or how grew it.

Feesimple. I'll tell you, sir: any thing bright and
edg'd, works thus strongly with me. Your hilts, now, I
can handle as boldly, look you else.

*Husband.** Nay, never blame my lord, master Well-tried, for I know a great many will swoon at the sight of a shoulder of mutton or a quarter of lamb: my lord may be excus'd, then, for a naked sword.

Welltried. This lord, and this knight, in dog-collars, would make a fine brace of beagles.

Maid. But, on my faith, 'twas mightily overseen of your father, not to bring you up to foils; or if he had bound you 'prentice to a cutler or an iron-monger.

Feesimple. Ha, pox, hang him, old gouty fool! he never brought me up to any lordly exercise, as fencing, dancing, tumbling, and such like; but, forsooth, I must write and read, and speak languages, and such base qualities, fit for none but gentlemen. Now, sir, would I tell him, "Father, you are a count, I am a lord: a pox o' writing, and reading, and languages! let me be brought up as I was born."

Subtle. But how, my lord, came you first not to endure the sight of steel?

Feesimple. Why I'll tell you, sir. When I was a child, an infant, an innocent†—

Maid. 'Twas ev'n now.

Feesimple. I being in the kitchen, in my lord my father's house, the cook was making minc'd pies: so, sir, I standing by the dresser, there lay a heap of plums: here was he mincing; what did me I, sir, being a notable little witty coxcomb, but popp'd my hand just under his chopping knife, to snatch some raisins, and

* Elsewhere in this play he is merely called *Husband*, though before this speech in the old copies *Knight* is inserted. It afterwards appears that such is his rank.

† The word *innocent* was used of old, sometimes, as synonymous with *fool*; as in the following passage,

"Nay, God forbid ye shoulde do so,
For he is but an *innocent*, lo,
In manner of a *fole*."

*Int: of the Nature of the Four Elements, pr. by
J. Rastell, E. 2.*

so was cut o'er the hand, and never since could I endure the sight of any edge tool.

Widow. Indeed, they are not fit for you my lord. And now you are all so well satisfied in this matter, pray, ladies, how like you this my gentlewoman?

Maid. In troth, madam, exceedingly well I: if you be provided, pray let me have her.

Wife. It should be my request, but that I am full.

Widow. What can you do? What's her name, my lord?

Feesimple. Her name? I know not. What's her name, Mr. Welltried?

Welltried. Her name? 'Slid, tell my lady your name.

Bold. Mistress Mary Princox, forsooth.

Widow. Mistress Mary Princox: she has wit, I perceive that already. Methinks she speaks as if she were my lord's brood.

Bold. Brood, madam? 'tis well known I am a gentlewoman. My father was a man of five hundred per annum, and he held something *in capite* too.

Welltried. So does my Lord, something.

Feesimple. Nay, by my troth, what I hold *in capite* is worth little or nothing.

Bold. I have had apt breeding, however my misfortune now makes me submit myself to service; but there is no ebb so low, but hath his tide again: when our days are at worst, they will mend in spite of the frowning destinies, for we cannot be lower than earth; and the same blind dame that hath cast her blear eyes hitherto upon my occasions, may turn her wheel, and at last wind them up with her white hand to some pinnacle, that prosperously may flourish in the sunshine of promotion.

Feesimple. Oh mouth, full of agility! I would give twenty marks, now, to any person that could teach me to convey my tongue (*sans* stumbling) with such dexterity to such a period. For her truth and her honesty I am

bound before, but now I have heard her talk, for her wit I will be bound body and goods.

Widow. Udsight, I will not leave her for my hood. I never met with one of these eloquent old gentlewomen before. What age are you, mistress Mary Princox?

Bold. I will not lie madam: I have numbered fifty-seven summers, and just so many winters have I past.

Subtle. But they have not past you; they lie frozen in your face.

Bold. Madam, if it shall please you to entertain me, so; if not, I desire you not to misconstrue my good will: there's no harm done, the door's as big as it was, and your ladyship's own wishes crown your beauty with content. As for these frumping gallants, let them do their worst; it is not in man's power to hurt me; 'tis well known I come not to be scoffed. A woman may bear, and bear till her back burst: I am a poor gentlewoman, and since virtue has now-a-days no other companion but poverty, I set the hare's head unto the goose giblets, and what I want one way, I hope I shall be enabled to supply the other.

Feesimple. An't please God, that thou wert not past children.

Widow. Is't even so, my lord? nay, good Princox, do not cry: I do entertain you. How do you occupy? what can you use?

Bold. Any thing fit to be put into the hands of a gentlewoman.

Widow. What are your qualities?

Bold. I can sleep on a low stool: if your ladyship be talking in the same room with any gentleman, I can read on a book, sing love songs, look up at the loover light,* hear and be deaf, see and be blind, be

* i. e. sky-light: see note to p. 93. of the *Death of Robert Earl of Huntington.*

ever dumb to your secrets, swear and equivocate, and whatsoever I spy, say the best.

Widow. Oh, rare crone, how art thou endued! but why did Master Bold's sister put you away?

Bold. I beseech you madam to neglect that desire: though I know your ladyship's understanding to be sufficient to partake, or take in, the greatest secret can be imparted, yet —

Widow. Nay, prithee tell the cause: come, here's none but friends.

Bold. Faith, madam, heigh ho! I was (to confess truly) a little foolish in my last service to believe men's oaths, but I hope my example, though prejudicial to myself, will be beneficial to other young gentlewomen in service. My mistress's brother (the gentleman you nam'd even now, master Bold,) having often attempted my honour, but finding it impregnable, vowed love and marriage to me at the last: I, a young thing and raw, being seduced, set my mind upon him, but friends contradicting the match, I fell into a grievous consumption; and upon my first recovery, lest the intended sacred ceremonies of nuptials should succeed, his sister, knowing this, thought it fit in her judgment, we should be farther asunder, and so put me out of her service.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Widow. God a mercy for this discovery, 'i'faith. Oh man what art thou, when thy cock is up? Come, will your lordship walk in? 'tis dinner time.

Enter hastily SELDOM with papers on his arm.

Omnes. Who's this? who's this?

Maid. This is our landlord, Master Seldom; an exceeding wise citizen, a very sufficient understanding man, and exceeding rich.

Omnes. Miracles are not ceased.

Widow. Good morrow, landlord: where have you been sweating?

Seldom. Good morrow to your honours : thrift is industrious ; your ladyship knows we will not stick to sweat for our pleasures, how much more ought we to sweat for our profits. I am come from master Ingen this morning, who is married, or to be married, and though your ladyship did not honor his nuptials with your presence, he hath by me sent each of you a pair of gloves, and Grace Seldom, my wife, is not forgot.

[*Exit.*

Omnes. God give him joy ; God give him joy.

[*Exeunt.**

Maid. Let all things most impossible change now !
Oh, perjur'd man ! oaths are but words, I see.
But wherefore should not we, that think we love
Upon full merit, that same worth once ceasing,
Surcease our love too, and find new desert ?
Alas ! we cannot ; love's a pit, which, when
We fall into, we ne'er get out again ;
And this same horrid news which me assaults
I would forget ; love blanches blackest faults.
Oh ! what path shall I tread for remedy,
But darkest shades, where love with death doth lie !

[*Exit.*

Manent Husband, Wife, Subtle.

Wife. Sir, I have often heard my husband speak
Of your acquaintance.

Husband. Nay, my virtuous wife,
Had it been but acquaintance, this his absence
Had not appear'd so uncouth ; but we two
Were school-fellows together, born and nurs'd,
Brought up, and liv'd since like the Gemini ;
Had but one suck : the tavern or the ordinary,
Ere I was married, that saw one of us
Without the other, said we walk'd by halves.

* That is, all but Lady Honor, Lady Perfect, the Husband, and Subtle.

Where dear, dear friend have you been all this while?

Subtle. Oh, most sweet friend, the world's so vicious,

That had I with such familiarity
Frequented you since you were married,
Possess'd and us'd your fortunes as before,
As in like manner you commanded mine,
The deprav'd thoughts of men would have proclaim'd
Some scandalous rumours from this love of ours,
Assaying, mine reflected on your lady;
And what a wound had that been to our souls,
When only friendship should have been the ground
To hurt her honor, and your confident peace,
Spite of mine own approv'd integrity?

Husband. Wife, kiss him, bid him welcome: pox
o'th' world!

Come, come, you shall not part from me in haste.
I do command thee use this gentleman
In all things like myself: if I should die,
I would bequeath him in my will to thee.*

Wife. Sir, you are most welcome, and let scandalous
tongues

No more deter you: I dare use you, sir,
With all the right belonging to a friend,
And what I dare, I dare let all men see.
My conscience, rather than men's thoughts, be free.

Husband. Will you look in? We'll follow you. Now
friend,

What think you of this lady?

[*Exit Wife.*]

Subtle. Why, sweet friend,
That you are happy in her: she is fair,
Witty and virtuous, and was rich to you.
Can there be an addition to a wife?

Husband. Yes, constancy; for 'tis not chastity
That lives remote, from all attempters free,

* Ought we not rather to read,
"I would bequeath *thee* in my will to *him*?"

But there 'tis strong and pure, where all that woo
It doth resist,* and turns them virtuous too.
Therefore, dear friend, by this, love's masculine kiss,
By all our mutual engagements past,
By all the hopes of amity to come,
Be you the settler of my jealous thoughts,
And make me kill my fond suspect of her
By assurance that she is loyal, otherwise
That she is false; and then, as she's past cure,
My soul shall ever after be past care.
That you are fittest for this enterprize
You must needs understand; since, prove she true
In this your trial, you, my dearest friend,
Whom only, rather than the world besides
I would have satisfied of her virtue, shall be,
And best conceal my folly, prove she weak;
'Tis better you should know't than any man,
Who can reform her, and do me no wrong.
Chimical metals, and bright gold itself,
By sight are not distinguish'd, but by th' test:
Thought makes good wives, but trial makes the best.
To the unskilful owner's eyes, alike
The Bristol sparkles as the diamond,†
But by a lapidary the truth is found.
Come, you shall not deny me.

Subtle. Do not wrong
So fair a wife, friend, and so virtuous,
Whose good name is a theme unto the world:
Make not a wound with searching, where was none.
Misfortune still such projects doth pursue;
He makes a false wife, that suspects a true.
Yet since you so importune, give me leave
To ruminate awhile, and I will straight

* The second 4to. reads *consist*.

† The second 4to. has this line:

“The Bristow sparkles *are as* diamond.”

The meaning is evident.

Follow, and give you an answer.

Husband. You must do it. [Exit.]

Subtle. Assure yourself dear—coxcomb, I will do't,
Or strangely be denied. All's as I wish'd ;
This was my aim, although I have seem'd strange.
I know this fellow, now, to be an ass,
A most unworthy husband, though in view
He bear himself thus fair ; she knows this too,
Therefore the stronger are my hopes to gain her ;
And my dear friend, that will have your wife tried,
I'll try her first, then trust her if I can ;
And, as you said most wisely, I hope to be
Both touch-stone to your wife and lapidary. [Exit.]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Enter SELDOM, his wife GRACE, working as in their shop.

Grace. Husband, these gloves are not fit for my wearing ; I'll put 'em into the shop and sell 'em : you shall give me a plain pair for them.

Seldom. This is wonderful ! wonderful ! this is thy sweet care and judgement in all things : this goodness is not usual in our wives. Well, Grace Seldom, that thou art fair is nothing, that thou art well spoken is nothing, that thou art witty is nothing, that thou art a citizen's wife is nothing ; but, Grace, that thou art fair, that thou art well spoken, that thou art witty, that thou art a citizen's wife, and that thou art honest I say, and let any man deny it that can, it is something, it is something ; I say, it is Seldom's something, and for all the sun-shine of my joy, mine eyes must rain upon thee.

Enter MOLL CUTPURSE, with a letter.

Moll. By your leave, Master Seldom, have you done the hangers I bespake for the Knight?

Seldom. Yes, marry have I, Mistress *hic* and *hæc* :* I'll fetch 'em to you. [*Exit.*

Moll. Zounds! does not your husband know my name? if it had been somebody else, I would have call'd him cuckoldly slave.

Grace. If it had been somebody else, perhaps you might.

Moll. Well, I may be even with him; all's clear. Pretty rogue, I have longed to know thee this twelve months, and had no other means but this to speak with thee. There's a letter to thee from the party.

Grace. What party?

Moll. The knight, Sir John Lovall.

Grace. Hence, lewd impudent!

I know not what to term thee, man or woman,
For Nature shaming to acknowledge thee
For either, hath produc'd thee to the world
Without a sex : some say thou art a woman,
Others a man ; and many thou art both
Woman and man, but I think rather neither,
Or man and horse, as the old centaurs were feign'd.

Moll. Why how now, Mistress "what lack ye?" are you so fine, with a pox? I have seen a woman look as modestly as you, and speak as sincerely, and follow the friars as zealously,† and she has been as sound a jumbler as e'er paid for't : 'tis true, Mrs. Fi'penny. I have sworn to leave this letter.

* In reference to her female sex, and male attire.

† *Follow the friars as zealously*] These words contain an allusion to Blackfriars as a common residence of the Puritans. The Widow subsequently refers to the same circumstance, when in Act III. she asks Bold—"Precise and learned Princox, dost thou not go to Blackfriars." That Blackfriars, although the play house was there, was crowded with Puritans may be proved by many authorities. *Vide* D. O. P. ix. p. 145.

Proudly. Then I'll take a pipe of tobacco here in your shop, if it be not offensive: I would be loath to be thought to come just at dinner-time. *Garçon!* fill sirrah.

Enter PAGE, with a pipe of tobacco.

What said the goldsmith for the money?

[Seldom having fetch'd a candle, walks off at the other end of the shop: Lord Proudly sits by his wife.]

Page. He said, my lord, he would lend no man money that he durst not arrest.

Proudly. How got that wit into Cheapside 'trow? he is a cuckold. Saw you my lady to-day? what says she? *[takes tobacco.]*

Page. Marry, my lord, she said her old husband had a great payment to make this morning, and had not left her so much as a jewel.

Proudly. A pox of her old cat's chaps! the teeth she had,

Have made a transmigration into hair:

She hath a bigger beard than I, by this light.

[Lord whispers to Grace.]

Seldom. This custom in us citizens is good,
Thus walking off when men talk with our wives:
It shews us courteous and mannerly.
Some count it baseness; he's a fool that does so:
It is the highest point of policy,
Especially when we have virtuous wives.

Grace. Fie! fie! you talk uncivilly, my lord.

Proudly. Uncivilly, mew! can a lord talk uncivilly? I think you, a finical taffaty pipkin, may be proud I'll sit so near it. Uncivilly, mew!

Grace. Your mother's cat has kitten'd in your mouth, sure.

Proudly. Prithee but note yon fellow: does he not walk and look as if he did desire to be a cuckold?

Grace. But you do not look as if you could make him one. Now they have dined, my lord.

Enter LORD FEESIMPLE, and WELLTRIED.

Feesimple. God save your lordship.

Proudly. How dost thou, Coz? hast thou got any more wit yet?

Feesimple. No, by my troth, I have but little money with that little wit I have, and the more wit ever the less money; yet as little as I have of either, I would give something that I durst but quarrel: I would not be abus'd thus daily as I am.

Welltried. Save you, my lord.

Proudly. Good Master Welltried, you can inform me: pray, how ended the quarrel betwixt young Bold and the other gentleman?

Welltried. Why very fairly, my lord, on honourable terms. Young Bold was injur'd, and did challenge him, fought in the field, and the other gave him satisfaction under his hand. I was Bold's second, and can shew it here.

Proudly. 'Tis strange there was no hurt done; yet I hold

The other gentleman far the better man.

Welltried. So do not I.

Proudly. Besides, they say the satisfaction that walks in the ordinaries is counterfeit.

Welltried. He lies that says so, and I'll make it good. And for I know my friend is out of town, What man soever wrongs him is my foe. I say he had full satisfaction, Nay, that which we may call submission, That the other sought peace first; and who denies this, Lord, knight, or gentleman, English, French, or Scot, I'll fight and prove it on him with my sword.

Feesimple. No, sweet Master Welltried, let's have no fighting, till (as you have promis'd) you have rid me from this foolish fear, and taught me to endure to look upon a naked sword.

Welltried. Well, and I'll be as good as my word.

Feesimple. But do you hear, Cozen Proudly? they say my old father must marry your sister Honor, and that he will disinherit me, and entail all his lordships on her, and the heir he shall beget on her body. Is't true or not?

Proudly. There is such a report.

Feesimple. Why, then I pray God he may die an old cuckoldly slave.

Oh world, what art thou? where is parent's love?

Can he deny me for his natural child?

Yet see (oh, fornicator) old and stiff,

Not where he should be, that's my comfort yet.

As for you, my lord, I will send to you as soon as I dare fight, and look upon steel; which, Master Welltried, I pray, let be with all possible speed.

Proudly. What d'ye this afternoon?

Feesimple. Faith, I have a great mind to see Long Meg, and the Ship at the Fortune.*

Proudly. Nay, i'faith, let's up and have a rest at primero.

Welltried. Agreed, my lord; and toward the evening I'll carry you to the company.

Feesimple. Well, no more words.

[*Exeunt Lord Proudly, Lord Feesimple and Welltried.*†

Grace. I wonder, sir, you will walk so, and let any body sit prating to your wife: were I a man, I'd thrust 'em out o'th' shop by the head and shoulders.

* It is doubtful whether two plays, (one called *Long Meg*, and the other *The Ship*) or only one with a double title are here intended to be spoken of. If two, it would disprove Malone's assertion, (Shakesp. by Bosw. III. 304.) that only one piece was represented on one day. By Henslowe's Papers it appears that *Longe Mege of Westminster* was performed at Newington in Feby. 1594, and according to Field, it must have continued for some time popular. Nothing is known of a dramatic piece of that date called *The Ship*. It may have been only a jig, often given at the conclusion of plays. The Fortune Theatre was in Golden Lane.

† The 2nd edit. misprints this stage direction "Enter Lord."

Seldom. There were no policy in that, wife; I should I lose my custom. Let them talk themselves weary, and give thee love tokens still, I lose not by it. Thy chastity's impregnable, I know it. Had I a dame whose eyes did swallow youth, Whose unchaste gulph together did take in Masters and men, the foot-boys and their lords, Making a gallimaufry in her blood, I would not walk thus then: but, virtuous wife, He that in chaste cars pours his ribald talk Begets hate to himself, and not consent; And even as dirt, thrown hard against a wall, Rebounds and sparkles in the thrower's eyes, So ill words, utter'd to a virtuous dame, Turn and defile the speaker with red shame.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter HUSBAND and WIFE.

Husband. Zounds! you're a whore: though I in-treat him fair

Before his face, in complement or so,
I not esteem him truly as this rush.

There's no such thing as friendship in the world,
And he that cannot swear, dissemble, lie,
Wants knowledge how to live, and let him die.

Wife. Sir, I did think you had esteem'd of him
As you made shew; therefore I us'd him well,
And yet not so, but that the strictest eye
I durst have made a witness of my carriage.

Husband. Plague o' your carriage! why he kiss'd
your hand,
Look'd babies in your eyes, and wink'd and pink'd.
You thought I had esteem'd him! S'blood, you whore!
Do not I know that you do know you lie?
When did'st thou hear me say and mean one thing?

Oh, I could kick you now, and tear your face,
And eat thy breasts like udders.

Wife. Sir, you may,
But if I know what hath deserv'd all this
I am no woman : 'cause he kiss'd my hand
Unwillingly ?

Husband. A little louder, pray.

Wife. You are a base fellow, an unworthy man,
As e'er poor gentlewoman match'd withal.
Why should you make such shew of love to any
Without the truth ? thy beastly mind is like
Some decay'd tradesman, that doth make his wife
Entertain those for gain he not endures.
Pish ! swell and burst : I had rather with thy sword
Be hew'd to pieces, than lead such a life.
Out with it, valiant sir : I hold you for
A drawer upon women, not on men.
I will no more conceal your hollow heart,
But e'en report you as you are in truth.

Husband. This is call'd marriage. Stop your mouth,
you whore.

Wife. Thy mother was a whore, if I be one.

Husband. You know there's company in the house.

Enter **SUBTLE.**

Sweet friend, what have you writ your letter ?

Subtle. 'Tis done, dear friend : I have made you
stay too long ;
I fear you'll be benighted.

Husband. Fie, no, no.

Madam, and sweetest wife, farewell ; God bless us.
Make much of master Subtle, here, my friend,

[*kisses her.*

Till my return, which may be ev'n as't happens,
According as my business hath success. [*Exit.*

Subtle. How will you pass the time now, fairest
mistress ?

Wife. In troth, I know not: wives without their husbands,
Methinks, are lowring days.

Subtle. Indeed, some wives
Are like dead bodies in their husband's absence.

Wife. If any wife be, I must needs be so,
That have a husband far above all men ;
Untainted with the humours others have,
A perfect man, and one that loves you truly :
You see the charge he left of your good usage.

Subtle. Push! he's an ass, I know him; a stark
ass,
Of a most barbarous condition,
False-hearted to his friend, rough unto you ;
A most dissembling and perfidious fellow.
I care not if he heard me: this I know,
And will make good upon him with my sword,
Or any for him, for he will not fight.

Wife. Fie, servant! you shew small civility,
And less humanity: d'ye requite
My husband's love thus ill? for what d'ye think
Of me, that you will utter to my face
Such harsh, unfriendly, slanderous injuries,
Even of my husband? Sir, forbear, I pray,
My ears, or your own tongue: I am no housewife
To hear my husband's merit thus deprav'd.

Subtle. His merit is a halter, by this light.
You think he's out-of town now; no such matter
But gone aside, and hath importun'd me
To try your chastity.

Wife. It cannot be.
Alas, he is as free from jealousy,
And ever was, as confidence itself.
I know he loves me, too, too heartily
To be suspitious, or to prove my truth.

Subtle. If I do fain in ought, ne'er may I purchase

The grace I hope for! and, fair mistress,
If you have any spirit, or wit, or sense,
You will be even with such a wretched slave.
Heaven knows I love you as the air I draw!
Think but how finely you may cuckold him,
And safely, too, with me, who will report
To him, that you are most invincible,
Your chastity not to be subdu'd by man.

Wife. When you know I'm a whore.

Subtle. A whore? fie, no;

That you have been kind, or so: your whore doth live
In Pickt-hatch,* Turnbull street.

Wife. Your whore lives there.

Well, servant, leave me to myself awhile:
Return anon; but bear this hope away,
I shall be with you, if I at all do stray. [*Exit Subtle.*
Why, here's right worldly friendship! ye are well met.
Oh, men! what are you? why is our poor sex
Still made the disgrac'd subjects in these plays
For vices, folly, and inconstancy,
When, were men look'd into with such critical eyes
Of observation, many would be found
So full of gross and base corruption,
That none (unless the devil himself turn'd writer)
Could feign so badly to express them truly?
Some wives that had a husband, now, like mine,
Would yield their honors up to any man:
Far be it from my thoughts! oh, let me stand,
Thou God of marriage and chastity,
An honor to my sex! no injury
Compel the virtue of my breast to yield!
It's not revenge for any wife to stain
The nuptial bed, although she be yok'd ill.

* A noted and often-mentioned purlieu, the resort and residence of prostitutes, &c. See note 48 to *The Muse's Looking Glass*, D. O. P. viii. 208; and note to *Merry Wives of Windsor*, A. i. sc. 2. where enough, and more than enough, is said upon the subject. Turnbull street has been already mentioned, p. 11.

Who falls, because her husband so hath done,
Cures not his wound, but in herself makes one.

[*Exit Wife.*]

SCENE III.

Enter INGEN, reading a letter ; sits down in a chair, and stamps with his foot : to him a SERVANT.

Ingen. Who brought this letter ?

Servant. A little Irish foot-boy, sir : he stays without for an answer.

Ingen. Bid him come in. Lord !

What deep dissemblers are these females, all.

How far unlike a friend this lady us'd me,

And here, how like one man in love she writes.

Enter MAID, like an Irish foot-boy with a dart, and gloves in her pocket, and a handkerchief.*

So bless me heaven, but thou art the prettiest boy
That e're ran by a horse ! hast thou dwelt long
With thy fair mistress ?

Maid. I came but this morning, sir.

Ingen. How fares thy lady, boy ?

Maid. Like to a turtle, that hath lost her mate :
Drooping she sits ; her grief, sir, cannot speak.
Had it a voice articulate, we should know

* It seems to have been the custom to employ the Irish as lackies or footmen at this period. R. Brathwaite, in his *Time's Curtaine Drawne*, 1621, speaking of the attendants of a courtier, mentions "two Irish lacquies" as among them. The *dart*, which, according to this play, and Middleton and Rowley's *Faire Quarrel*, (Edit. 1622) they carried, was perhaps intended as an indication of the country from which they came, as being part of the accoutrements of the native Irish : thus in the description of the dumb shew preceding Act ii. of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, we find the following passage : "after which there came a man bare-headed, with long black shagged hair down to his shoulders, apparaled with an Irish jacket and shirt, having an Irish dagger by his side and a *dart* in his hand." The *shirt* in our day seldom forms part of the dress of the resident Irish. Taylor, the Water Poet, wrote a tract called *The Irish footman*. The Irish have now adopted, in this country, the more respectable occupations of paviors and porters.

How, and for what cause she suffers ; and perhaps,
(But 'tis unlikely) give her comfort, sir.

Weeping she sits, and all the sound comes from her
Is like the murmur of a silver brook,
Which her tears, truly, would make there about her,
Sate she in any hollow continent.

Ingen. Believe me, boy, thou hast a passionate
tongue,

Lively expression, or thy memory
Hath carried thy lesson well away.
But wherefore mourns thy lady ?

Maid. Sir, you know,
And would to God, I did not know myself !

Ingen. Alas ! it cannot be for love to me.
When last I saw her, she revil'd me, boy,
With bitterest words, and wish'd me never more
To approach her sight ; and for my marriage, now,
I do sustain it, as a penance due
To the desert that made her banish me.

Maid. Sir, I dare swear, she did presume, no words,
Nor dangers had been powerful to restrain
Your coming to her, when she gave the charge—
But are you married truly ?

Ingen. Why, my boy,
Dost think I mock myself ? I sent her gloves.

Maid. The gloves she has return'd you, sir, by me,
And prays you give them to some other lady,
That you'll deceive next, and be perjured to.
Sure, you have wrong'd her : sir, she bade me tell you,
She ne'er thought goodness dwelt in many men,
But what there was of goodness in the world,
She thought you had it all ; but now she sees
'The jewel she esteem'd is counterfeit ;
That you are but a common man, yourself
A traitor to her, and her virtuous love ;
That all men are betrayers, and their breasts
As full of dangerous gulfs as is the sea,

Where any woman, thinking to find harbour,
She and her honor are precipitated,
And never to be brought with safety off.
Alas, my hapless lady! desolate,
Distress'd, forsaken virgin!

Ingen. Sure, this boy
Is of an excellent nature, who so newly
Ta'en to her service, feels his mistress grief
As he and they were old familiar friends.
Why weep'st thou, gentle lad?

Maid. Who hath one tear,
And would not save't from all occasions,
From brother's slaughters, and from mother's death
To spend it here for my distressed lady?
But, sir, my lady did command me beg
To see your wife, that I may bear to her
The sad report, what creature could make you
Untie the hand fast plighted unto her.

Ingen. Wife, wife, come forth! now, gentle
be judge,

Enter INGEN'S BROTHER, like a woman masked. INGEN
kisses her.

If such a face as this, being paid with scorn
By her I did adore, had not full power
To make me marry.

Maid. By the God of love,
She's a fair creature, but, faith, should be fairer.
My lady, gentle mistress, one that thought
She had some interest in this gentleman,
(Who now is only yours) commanded me
To kiss your white hand, and to sigh and weep,
And wish you that content she should have had
In the fruition of her love you hold.
She bade me say, God give you joy, to both;
Yet this withal (if ye were married)
No one, her foot-steps ever more should meet,
Nor see her face, but in a winding sheet.

Brother. Alas, poor lady! 'faith I pity her,
And, but to be i'th' same state, could forego
Any thing I possess to ease her woe.

Maid. Love's blessing light upon thy gentle soul!
Men rail at women, mistress, but 'tis we
Are false and cruel, ten times more unkind;
You are smoother far, and of a softer mind.
Sir, I have one request more.

Ingen. Gentle lad,
It must be one of a strange quality
That I deny thee: both thy form, and mind
Inform me that thy nurture hath been better,
Than to betray thee to this present life.

Maid. 'Tis, that you would vouchsafe to entertain
me.

My feet do tremble under me to bear
My body back unto my uncouth lady
To assure her grief. What heart so hard, would owe
A tongue to tell so sad a tale to her?

Alas, I dare not look upon her eyes,
Where wronged love sits like the basilisk,
And sure would kill me for my dire report:
Or rather, should not I appear like death,

[*holding up his dart.*]

When every word I spake shot through her heart
More mortally than his unsparing dart.

Brother. Let me speak for the boy.

Ingen. To what end, love?

No, I will sue to him, to follow me.
In troth I love thy sweet condition,
And may live to inform thy lady of thee.
Come in, dry, dry thine eyes, respite thy woe;
The effects of causes* crown, or overthrow.

* The second 4to. has it "the effects of *pauses*," which if not nonsense is very like it.

SCENE IV.

Enter LORD PROUDLY, LORD FEESIMPLE, WELL-TRIED, SELDOM, WIDOW, BOLD *pinning in a ruff*, WIFE.

Proudly. Slight, what should be become of her!
you swear

She past not forth of doors, and i'th' house she is not!

Widow. Did you not see her, Princ Cox?

Proudly. This same bawd
Has brought her letters from some younger brother,
And she is stolen away.

Bold. Bawd! I defy you. Indeed, your lordship thinks you may make bawds of whom you please. I'll take my oath upon a book, since I met her in the necessary house i'th' morning, I ne'er set eye on her.

Grace. She went not out of doors.

Proudly. Sure, she has an invincible ring.

Feesimple. Marry, she's the honestest woman, for some of their rings are visible enough, the more shame for them, still say I. Let the pond at Islington be searched: go to, there's more have drown'd themselves for love this year than you are aware of.

Proudly. Pish! you are a fool.

Welltried. S'heart, call him fool again.

Feesimple. By this light and I will, as soon as ever you have shewed me the swaggerers.

Wife. Her clothes are all yonder, my lord.

Grace. And even those same she had on to day.

Proudly. Madam, where is your husband?

Wife. Rid into the country.

Feesimple. O' my conscience, rid into France with your sister.

Omnes. Away, away; for shame!

Feesimple. Why, I hope she is not the first lady that has ran away with other women's husbands.

Welltried. It may be she's stolen out to see a play.

Proudly. Who should go with her, man?—

Widow. Upon my life you'll hear of her at master Ingen's house: some love past betwixt them, and we heard that he was married to day to another.

Proudly. S'heart, I'll go see. [*Exit Lord Proudly.*]

Welltried. Come to the Swaggerers.

Feesimple. Mercy upon me! a man or a—Lord now? [*Exeunt Lord Feesimple, Welltried.*]

Omnes. Here's a coil with a lord and his sister.

Widow. Princ Cox, hast not thou pinned in that ruff yet? ah! how thou fumblest.

Bold. Troth, madam, I was ne'er brought up to it; 'tis chamber-maids work, and I have ever liv'd gentlewoman, and been us'd accordingly. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Enter HUSBAND and SUBTLE.

Subtle. She's a rare wife, believe it, sir: were all such,

We never should have false inheritors.

Husband. Pish! friend, there is no woman in the world

Can hold out in the end, if youth, shape, wit,
Met in one subject, do assault her aptly;
For failing once, you must not faint, but try
Another way: the paths of women's minds
Are crooked, and diverse; they have by-ways
To lead you to the palace of their pleasures,
And you must woo discreetly. First, observe
The disposition of her you attempt:
If she be sprightful, and heroical,
Possess her that you are valiant, and have spirit,

Talk nothing but of beating every man
That is your hinderance though you do not do it,
Or dare not, 'tis no matter. Be she free,
And of a liberal soul, give bounteously
To all the servants; let your angels fly
About the room, although you borrow'd 'em.
If she be witty, so must your discourse
Get wit, what shift soe'er you make for it,
Though't cost you all your land; and then a song
Or two is not amiss, although you buy 'em :
There's many in the town will furnish you.

Subtle. But still, I tell you, you must use her
roughly.

Beat her face black and blue, take all her clothes
And give them to some punk: this will be ground
For me to work upon.

Husband. All this I have done.
I have left her now as bare, that should I die,
Her fortune, o' my conscience, would be
To marry some tobacco-man: she has nothing
But an old black-work wais-coat, which would serve
Exceeding well to sit i'th' shop, and light
Pipes for the lousy footmen. And, sweet friend,
First here's a jewel to present her; then,
Here is a sonnet writ against myself,
Which as thine own thou shalt accost her with.
Farewell, and happy success attend thee. [Exit.

Subtle. Ha, ha, ha!

[he reads.

Fairest, still wilt thou be true
To man so false to thee?
Did he lend a husband's due,
Thou did'st owe him loyalty;
But will curses, wants, and blows
Breed no change in thy white soul?
Be not a fool to thy first vows,
Since his first breach doth thy faith control.
No beauty else could be so chaste;

Think not thou honour'st woman, then,
Since by thy conscience all disgrac'd
Are robb'd of the dear loves of men.
Then grant me my desire, that vow to prove
A real husband, his adulterate love.

Took ever man more pains to be a cuckold!
Oh! monstrous age where men themselves, we see,
Study and pay for their own infamy.

SCENE II.

*Enter INGEN, MAID, LORD PROUDLY, BROTHER
like a woman : swords drawn.*

Proudly. Give me my sister! I'll have her forth thy
heart.

Ingen. No earthly lord can pull her out of that,
Till he have pluck'd my heart first out. My lord,
Wer't not inhospitable, I could wrong you here
In my own house. I am so full of woe,
For your lost sister, that by all my joys
Hop'd for in her, my heart weeps tears of blood :
A whiter virgin, and a worthier,
Had ne'er creation; Leda's swan was black
To her virginity, and immaculate thoughts.

Proudly. Where hast thou hid her? give her me
again;

For by the God of vengeance, be she lost,
The female hate shall spring betwixt our names,
Shall never die, while one of either house
Survives: our children shall at seven years old
Strike knives in one another.

Ingen. Let hell gape
And take me quick, if I know where she is;
But am so charg'd with sorrow for her loss,
Being the cause of it, (as no doubt I am)

That I had rather fall upon my sword

[Offering to kill himself.]

Than breathe a minute longer.

Brother. Oh sir ! hold.

Proudly. Thou shalt not need : I have a sword,
to bathe

In thy false blood, inhuman murderer.

Maid. Good sir, be pacified : I'll go, I'll run
Many a mile to find your sister out.

She never was so desperate of grace,

By violence to rob herself of life,

And so her soul endanger. Comfort, sir,

She's but retir'd somewhere, on my life.

Ingen. Prithee, let me alone— [To his brother.]

Do I stand to defend that wretched life

That is in doubt of hers ? here, worthy lord,

Behold a breast, fram'd of thy sister's love :

Hew it, for thou shalt strike but on a stock,

Since she is gone that was the cause it liv'd.

Proudly. Out, false dissembler ! art not married ?

Ingen. No ; behold it is my younger brother dress'd ;

[Plucks off his head-tire.]

A man, no woman, that hath gull'd the world,

Intended for a happier event

Than this that follow'd, that she now is gone.

Oh, fond experiments of simple man !

Fool to thy fate, since all thy project, meant

But mirth, is now converted unto death.

Maid. Oh, do not burst me, joy ! that modesty [aside.]

Would let me shew myself to finish all !

Proudly. Nay, then thou hast my sister somewhere,
villain !

'Tis plain, now, thou wilt steal thy marriage.

She is no match for thee, assure thyself.

If all the law in England, or my friends

Can cross it, 't shall not be.

Ingen. Would 'twere so well,
And that I knew the lady to be safe !
Give me no ill words. Sir, this boy and I
Will wander like two pilgrims, till we find her.
If you do love her as you talk, do so :
The love or grief that is express'd in words,
Is slight and easy ; 'tis but shallow woe
That makes a noise ; deep'st waters stillest go.
I love her better than thy parents did,
Which is beyond a brother.

Proudly. Slave ! thou liest.

Ingen. Zounds !

[*about to strike.*

Brother. Kill him !

Maul. Oh hold ! Sir, you dishonour much your
brother,

To counsel him 'gainst hospitality
To strike in his own house.

Ingen. You, lord insolent, I will fight with you :
Take this as a challenge, and set your time.

Proudly. To-morrow morning, Ingen ;
'Tis that I covet, and provoke thee for.

Brother. Will you not strike him now ?

Ingen. No ; my good boy
Is both discreet and just in his advice.
Thy glories are to last but for a day :
Give me thy hand ;

To morrow morning thou shalt be no lord.

Proudly. To-morrow noon, thou shalt not be at all.

Ingen. Pish ! why should you think so ? have not
I arms,

A soul as bold as yours, a sword as true ?
I do not think your honor in the field,
Without your lordship's liveries, will have odds.

Proudly. Farewell, and let's have no excuses, pray.
[*Exit Proudly.*

Ingen. I warrant you. Pray, say your prayers to
night,

And bring no ink-horn w'ye, to set your hand to
A satisfactory recantation. [Exit.]

Maid. Oh, wretched maid! whose sword can I
pray for?

But by the other's loss, I must find death.

Oh, odious brother, if he kill my love!

Oh, bloody love, if he should kill my brother!

Dispair on both sides of my discontent

Tells me, no safety rests but to prevent. [Exit.]

SCENE III.

Enter WIDOW and BOLD, like PRINCOX.

Widow. What's o'clock, Princ Cox!

Bold. Bed-time, an't please you, madam.

Widow. Come, undress me. Would God had made
me a man!

Bold. Why, madam?

Widow. Because

I would have been in bed as soon as they.

We are so long unpinning and unlacing.

Bold. Yet many of us, madam, are quickly undone sometime; but herein we have the advantage of men, though they can be a'bed sooner than we, its a great while, when they are a'bed, e're they can get up.

Widow. Indeed, if they be well laid, Princ Cox, one cannot get them up again in haste.

Bold. Oh God! madam, how mean you that? I hope you know, ill things taken into a gentlewoman's ears, are the quick corrupters of maiden modesty: I would be loth to continue in any service unfit for my virgin estate, or where the world should take any notice of light behaviour in the lady I follow; for, madam, the main point of chastity in a lady is to build the rock of a good opinion amongst the people by circumstances, and a fair show she must make. *Si non caste tamen caute* madam; and though wit be a wanton,

■ madam, yet I beseech your ladyship, for your own credit and mine, let the bridle of judgment be always
■ in the chaps of it, to give it head or restrain it, according as time and place shall be convenient.

! Widow. Precise and learned Princ Cox, dost not thou go to Blackfriars?

! Bold. Most frequently, madam, unworthy vessel that I am to partake or retain any of the delicious dew, that is there distilled.

Widow. But why shouldst thou ask me what I meant e'en now? I tell thee there's nothing utter'd but* carries a double sense, one good, one bad; but if the hearer apply it to the worst, the fault lies in his or her corrupt understanding, not in the speaker; for to answer your Latin, *pravis omnia prava*. Believe me, wench, if ill come into my fancy, I will purge it by speech: the less will remain within. A pox of these nice mouth'd creatures! I have seen a narrow pair of lips utter as broad a tale as can be bought for money: indeed, an ill tale unutter'd, is like a maggot in a nut, it spoils the whitest kernel.

Bold. You speak most intelligently, madam.

Widow. Hast not done yet? thou art an old fumbler, I perceive. Methinks, thou dost not do things like a woman.

Bold. Madam, I do my endeavour, and the best can do no more: they that could do better, it may be would not, and then 'twere all one. But rather than be a burthen to your ladyship, I protest sincerely, I would beg my bread; therefore I beseech you, madam, to hold me excus'd, and let my good will stand for the action.

Widow. Let thy good will stand for the action? If good will would do it, there's many a lady in this land

* Both the old copies read "that carries a double sense," but it is clearly a misprint.

would be content with her old lord; and thou canst not be a burthen to me, without thou lie upon me, and that were preposterous in thy sex. Take no exceptions at what I say: remember you said stand ev'n now. There was a word for one of your coat, indeed!

Bold. I swear, madam: you are very merry: God send you good luck. Has your ladyship no waters that you use at bed-time?

Widow. No in troth, Princ Cox.

Bold. No complexion?

Widow. None but mine own, I swear. Did'st thou ever use any?

Bold. No indeed, madam; now and then a piece of scarlet, or so; a little white and red cerusse: but in troth, madam, I have an excellent receipt for a night-mask as ever you heard.

Widow. What is it?

Bold. Boar's grease one ounce, Jordan almonds blanch'd and ground a quartern, red rose-water half a pint, mare's urine, newly cover'd, half a score drops.

Widow. Fogh! no more of thy medicine, if thou lov'st me. Few of our knights errant, when they meet a fair lady errant in a morning, would think her face had lain so plaster'd all night. Thou hast had some apothecary to thy sweetheart. But leaving this face-physic, (for, by my troth, it may make others have good ones, but it makes me a scurvy one), which of all the gallants in the town would'st thou make a husband of, if thou might'st have him for thy chusing?

Bold. In troth, madam, but you'll say I speak blindly, but let my love stand aside—

Widow. I think it not fit, indeed, your love should stand in the middle.

Bold. I say master Bold. Oh! do but mark him, madam; his leg, his hand, his body, and all his members stand in print.

Widow. Out upon thee, Princ Cox! no; methinks

Welltried's a handsome fellow. I like not these starch'd gallants; masculine faces, and masculine gestures please me best.

Bold. How like you master Pert?

Widow. Fie upon him! when he is in his scarlet clothes, he looks like a man of wax, and I had as lieve have a dog o' wax: I do not think but he lies in a case o' nights. He walks as if he were made of gins,* as if nature had wrought him in a frame: I have seen him sit discontented a whole play, because one of the purls of his band was fallen (out of his reach) to order again.†

Bold. Why, Bold, madam, is clean contrary.

Widow. I, but that's as ill: each extreme is alike vicious; his careful carelessness is his study. He spends as much time to make himself slovenly, as the other to be spruce. His garters hang over upon the calves of his legs, his doublet unbutton'd, and his points untrussed; his hair in's eyes like a drunkard, and his hat, worn on his hinder part of his head as if he car'd more for his memory than his wit, makes him look as if he were distracted. Princox, I would have you lie with me: I do not love to lie alone.

Bold. With all my heart, madam.

Widow. Are you clean skinned?

Bold. Clean skinned, madam? there's a question! do you think I have the itch? I am an English woman, I protest: I scorn the motion.

‡ *Gins.* Such is the reading, and probably the correct reading, of the second 4to. the first has it *gyves*: the Widow means that master Pert walks as if he were made of *wires*; and *gyves*, or fetters, are hardly so applicable as *gins*, which were usually composed of wire.

† So in *The Fatal Dowry* Liladam exclaims, "Uds light! my Lord, one of the *purls* of your band is, without all discipline, fallen out of his rank." A. II. Sc. 2. These little phrases may assist in tracing the authorship of different parts of a play by distinct authors.

Bess Turnups, and she swears all the gentlewomen went to see a play at the Fortune,* and are not come yet, and she believes they sup with the players.

Tear-chaps. Damn-me, we must kill all those rogues : we shall never keep a whore honest for them.

Bots. Go your ways, sirrah. We'll have but a gallon piece, and an ounce of tobacco.

Drawer. I beseech you, let it be but pottles.†

Spill-blood. S'heart, you rogue! [Exit *Drawer.*

Enter WELLTRIED and LORD FEESIMPLE.

Whore-bang. Master Well-tried! welcome as my soul.

Enter DRAWER, with wine, plate and tobacco.

Bots. Noble lad, how do'st thou?

Spill-blood. As welcome as the tobacco and the wine, boy.

Tear-chaps. Damn-me thou art.

Feesimple. Bless me, (save you gentlemen,) they have not one face among 'em! I could wish myself well from them: I would I had put out something upon my return; I had as lieve be at Barmuthoes.‡

* The *Fortune* Theatre was built in 1599, by Edward Allen, the founder of Dulwich College, at an expence of 520*l.* and in the Prologue of Middleton and Dekker's *Roaring Girl* (D. O. P. VI. 5.) it is called "a vast theatre." It was 80 feet square, and was consumed by fire in 1621.

† A pottle was half a gallon.

‡ He means that he wishes he had insured his return, as he would as willingly be at the Bermudas, or (as it was then called) 'the Isle of Devils.' In a note on "the still vexed Barmoothes" (*Tempest*, A. I. sc. 2.) it is shewn, that the *Bermudas* was a court name for the privileged resort of such characters as Whore-bang and his companions.

The notions entertained by our ancestors of the Bermudas is distinctly shewn in the following extract from Middleton's *Any-thing for a Quiet Life*, 1662, Act V. *Chamlet* is troubled with a sbrewish wife, and is determined to leave England and go somewhere else: he says: "the place I speak of has been kept with thunder, with frightful lightnings, amazing noises; but now (the

and glasses, and quart pots: if they have nothing by 'em, they strike 'em with the pox, and you know that will lay one's nose as flat as a basket-hilt dagger.

Feesimple. Well, let me alone.

Tear-chaps. This bully dares not drink.

Feesimple. Dare I not, sir?

Welltried. Well said; speak to him, man.

Feesimple. You had best try me, sir.

Spill-blood. We four will drink four healths to four of the seven deadly sins, Pride, Drunkenness, Wrath and Lechery.

Feesimple. I'll pledge 'em, and I thank you; I know 'em all. Here's one.

Whore-bang. Which of the sins?

Feesimple. By my troth, even to Pride.

Welltried. Why, well said; and in this do not you only pledge your mistress's health, but all the women's in the world.

Feesimple. So now, this little cup to Wrath, because he and I are strangers.

Tear-chaps. Brave boy! damn-me he shall be a roarer.

Feesimple. Damn-me, I will be a roarer, or't shall cost me a fall.

Bots. The next place that falls, pray, let him have it.

Feesimple. Well, I have two of my healths to drink yet, Lechery and Drunkenness, which even shall go together.

Welltried. Why how now, my lord, a moralist?

Bots. Damn-me, art thou a lord? what virtues hast thou?

Feesimple. Virtues? enough to keep e'er a damn-me company in England: methinks you should think it virtue enough to be a lord.

Whore-bang. Will not you pledge these healths, master Welltried? we'll have no observers.

Feesimple. It is as free for me as you, d'ye hear, Patch?*

Tear-chaps. I have paid more for't.

Welltried. Nay, I'll bear him witness in a truth : his soul lies for't,† my lord.

Spill-blood. Welltried, you are grown proud since you got good clothes and have followed your lord.

[*Strikes and they scuffle.*

Whore-bang. I have known you lousy, Welltried.

Welltried. Roarer, you lie.

[*Draw and fight ; throw pots and stools.*

Drawer. Oh Jesu!

All Swaggerers. Zounds! cleave or be cleft; pell-mell, slash arms and legs.

Feesimple. Heart! let me alone with 'em.

[*Break off, and exeunt all the Swaggerers.*

Welltried. Why, now thou art a worthy wight, indeed, a Lord of Lorn.

Feesimple. I am a mad man : look, is not that one of their heads?

Welltried. Fie! no, my lord.

Feesimple. Damn-me but 'tis; I would not wish you to cross me a'purpose : if you have any thing to say to me, so ; I am ready.

Welltried. Oh, brave lord! many a roarer thus is made by wine. Come, it is one of their heads, my lord.

Feesimple. Why so then, I will have my humour. If you love me, let's go break windows somewhere.

Welltried. Drawer, take your plate. For the reckoning there's some of their cloaks : I will be no hot-log to such.

Drawer. God's blessing o'your heart, for thus riding the house of them. [Exeunt.

* *Patch* and *fool* are synonymous in old writers. *Feesimple* alludes also to the *patch* on the face of *Tear-chaps*.

† *His soul lies for't*] That is, his soul *lies in pawn* for employing the oath.

So, stand we ne'er so leprous to men's eye,
It cannot hurt heart-known integrity.
You have trusted to that fond opinion,
This is the way to have a widow-hood,
By getting to her bed. Alas! young man,
Should'st thou thyself tell thy companions
Thou hast dishonour'd me, (as you men have tongues
Forked and venom'd 'gainst our subject sex;)
It should not move me, that know 'tis not so:
Therefore depart. Truth be my virtuous shield.

Bold. Few widows would do thus.

Widow. All modest would.

Bold. To be in bed, and in possession
Even of the mark I aim'd at, and go off
Foil'd and disgrac'd! Come, come, you'll laugh at me
Behind my back; publish I wanted spirit,
And mock me to the ladies; call me child,
Say you denied me, but to try the heat
And zeal of my affection toward you,
Then clap't up with a rime,—as for example—

He coldly loves retires for one vain trial,

For we are yielding, when we make denial.

Widow. Servant, I make no question, from this time
You'll hold a more reverent opinion
Of some that wear long coats; and 'tis my pride
To assure you, that there are amongst us good,
And with this continency. If you go away,
I'll be so far from thinking it defect,
That I will hold you worthiest of men.

Bold. S'heart! I am Tantalus: my long'd-for fruit
Bobs at my lips, yet still it shrinks from me.
Have not I that, which men say never fails
To o'ercome any, opportunity? ^{*}
Come, come; I am too cold in my assault.
By all the virtues that yet ever were
In man, or woman, I with reverence

* "O, opportunity, thy guilt is great," &c.
Shakesp. Tarq. and Lucrece.

Do leap their dams; because man does not so,
Shall we conclude his making happiless?

Bold. You put me down, yet will not put me down.
I am too gentle: some of you, I have heard,
Love not these words, but force; to have it done
As they sing prick-song, ev'n at the first sight.

Widow. Go to: keep off; by heaven and earth,
I'll call else!

Bold. How, if no body hear you?

Widow. If they do not,
I'll kill you with mine own hand; never stare—
Or failing that, fall on this sword myself.

Bold. Oh widow wonderful! if thou be'st not
honest,
Now God forgive my mother and my sisters.
Think but how finely, madam, undiscover'd
For ever you and I might live: all day your gentle-
woman

To do you service, but all night your man
To do you service: newness of the trick,
If nothing else, might stir ye.

Widow. 'Tis a stale one,
And was done in the Fleet ten years ago.
Will you be gone? the door is open for you.

Bold. Let me but tarry till the morning, madam,
To send for clothes. Shall I go naked home?

Widow. 'Tis best time now; it is but one o'clock,
And you may go unseen: I swear, by heaven,
I would spend all the night to sit and talk w'ye,
If I durst trust you, I do love you so.

My blood forsakes my heart now you depart.

Bold. S'heart! will you marry me hereafter, then?

Widow. No, you are too young, and I am much
too old;

I, and unworthy, and the world will say,
We married not for love. Good morrow, servant.

[*Exit Widow.*

Bold. Why so: these women are the errant'st

abroad, Bold has lain with her, and is now conveyed out of doors. Is this the Lady Perfect, with a pox? The truth is, her virtuous chastity began to make me make a miracle of her, still holding out to me, notwithstanding her husband's most barbarous usage of her; but now, indeed, 'tis no marvel, since another possesses her. Well, madam, I'll go find out your cuckold; I'll be reveng'd on you, and tell a tale Shall tickle him. This is a cheat in love Not to be borne, another to beguile Me of the game I play'd for all this while. [Exit.

SCENE II.

*Enter WELL-TRIED, and BOLD putting on his doublet:
FEE-SIMPLE on a bed, as in BOLD's chamber.*

Welltried. You see, we made bold with your lodging: indeed, I did assure myself you were fast for this night.

Bold. But how the devil came this fool in your company?

Welltried. S'foot, man, I carried him last night among the roarers, to flesh him; and, by this light, he got drunk, and beat 'em all.

Bold. Why, then he can endure the sight of a drawn sword now?

Welltried. Oh God, Sir, I think in my conscience he will eat steel shortly. I know not how his conversion will hold after this sleep, but in an hour or two last night, he was grown such a little damn-me, that I protest, I was afraid of the spirit that I myself had raised in him. But this other matter, of your expulsion thus, mads me to the heart. Were you in bed with her?

Bold. In bed, by Heaven.

Welltried. I'll be hang'd if you were not busy too soon: you should have let her slept first.

Bold. Zounds! man, she put her hand to my breasts, and swore I was no maid: now I, being eager

Bold. Pray leave my chamber.

Welltried. Pox upon your chamber!
I care not for your chamber, nor yourself,
More than you care for me.

Bots. S'blood! I as little for you.

Welltried. Why, fare you well.

Bots. Why, farewell you. *Welltried*, I prithee stay:
Thou know'st I love thee.

Welltried. S'heart! I love you as well; but for my
spleen, or choler, I think I have as much as you.

Bots. Well, friend,
This is the business you must do for me.
Repair unto the widow, where give out,
To-morrow morn I shall be married:
Invite her to the wedding. I have a trick,
To put upon this lord, too, whom I made
My instrument to prefer me.

Welltried. What shall follow,
I will not ask, because I meant to see't.
The jars 'twixt friends still keeps their friendship sweet.

[*Exit.*

Feesimple. Why, *Welltried*, you rogue! what's that?
a vision?

Bold. Why how now, my lord? whom do you call
rogue? the gentleman you name is my friend: if you
were wise I should be angry.

Feesimple. Angry with me? why damn-me, sir, and
you be, out with your sword: it is not with me, I tell
you, as it was yesterday; I am flesh'd, man, I. Have
you any thing to say to me?

Bold. Nothing but this: how many do you think
you have slain last night?

Feesimple. Why five, I never kill less.

Bold. There were but four. My lord, you had
best provide yourself and be gone: three you have
slain stark dead.

Feesimple. You jest.

SCENE III.

Enter MAID, like the foot-boy: SELDOM with a couple of serjeants, PITTS, DONNER.

Maid. Sir, 'tis most true, and in this shall you be
Unlike to other citizens, that arrest
To undo gentlemen : your clemency here,
Perchance, saves two lives ; one from the other's sword,
The other from the law's. This morn they fight,
And though your debtor be a lord, yet should he
Miscarry, certainly your debt were lost.

Seldom. Do'st thou serve the Lord Proudly ?

Maid. Sir, I do.

Seldom. Well, such a boy as thou is worth more
money
Than thy lord owes me. 'Tis not for the debt
I do arrest him, but to end this strife,
Which both may lose my money and his life.

Enter LORD PROUDLY, with a riding rod.

Proudly. My horse there ! Zounds ! I would not for
the world
He should alight before me in the field :
My name and honor were for ever lost.

Seldom. Good morrow to your honor. I do hear
Your lordship this fair morning is to fight,
And for your honor : did you never see
The play, where the fat knight, hight Old-castle,
Did tell you truly what this honor was ?*

* This passage has been adduced by Dr. Farmer, to shew that Falstaff was originally called by Shakespear *Old-castle*, according to the tradition mentioned by Rowe, and supported by Fuller in his *Worthies*, and by other authorities. The point is argued at great length in Malone's Shakespear by Boswell, xvi. 410. *et seq.* ; and the decisions of the learned have been various ; but the balance of evidence is undoubtedly in favour of the opinion that Shakespear made the change, perhaps to avoid the confusion of his very original character with the mere fat buffoon of the old play of Henry V. a point not adverted to in the discussion. Field's testimony seems tolerably decisive.

Ingen. Frank, I protest, you shall do injury
Upon my foe, and much disturbance, too,
Unto my soul departing, die I here
Fairly, and on my single enemies sword,
If you should not let him go off untouch'd.
Now, by the master of thy life and mine,
I love thee, boy, beyond any example,
As well as thou do'st me; but should I go
Thy second to the field, as thou dost mine,
And if thine enemy kill'd thee like a man,
I would desire never to see him more,
But he should bear himself off with those wounds
He had receiv'd from thee, from that time safe,
And without persecution by the law;
For what hap is our foes might be our own,
And no man's judgment sits in justice' place,
But weighing other men's as his own case*.

Brother. He has the advantage of you, being a
lord;

For should you kill him, you are sure to die,
And by some lawyer with a golden tongue,
That cries for right, ten angels on his side,
Your daring meet him call'd presumption;
But kill he you, he, and his noble friends
Have such a golden snaffle for the jaws
Of man-devouring Pythagorean law,
They'll rein her stubborn chaps ev'n to her tail:
And (though she have iron teeth to meaner men),
So master her, that who displeas'd her most,
She shall lie under like a tired jade;
For small boats on rough seas are quickly lost,
But ships ride safe, and cut the waves that toss'd.†

* The second edit. is here right: the first reads *scale* for *case*.

† The 2nd. Edition has a curious mis-reading of this line,
which makes nonsense of it: "But ships ride safe and cut *what*
by they list."

Will more than hang you, damn you. Come, prepare!

Ingen. Brother, walk off, and take the boy away.
Is he hurt much?

Brother. Nothing, or very little.

[*Proudly thrusts the boy out.*

Ingen. I'll bind your wound up first: your loss of
blood

May sooner make you faint.

Proudly. Ingen, thou art
A worthy gentleman: for this courtesy,
Go to, I'll save thy life. Come on, sir!

[*A pass or two.*

I'll cut your codpiece point, sir, with this thrust,
And then down go your breeches.

Ingen. Your lordship's merry. [Pass.
I had like to have spoil'd your cut-work band.

*Enter MAID, like a foot-boy, running; BROTHER after
her: MAID kneels betwixt them.*

Maid. Oh master, hold your hand! my lord, hold
yours,
Or let your swords meet in this wretched breast!
Yet you are both well; what blood you have lost,
Give it as for the injury you did,
And now be friends.

Proudly. S'heart, 'tis a loving rogue.

Ingen. Kind boy, stand up: 'tis for thy wound he
bleeds;

My wrong is yet unsatisfied.

Proudly. Hence! away!
It is a sister's loss, that whets my sword.

Maid. Oh stay, my lord! behold your sister here,
[discovers herself.

Bleeding by your hand: servant, see your mistress
Turn'd to thy servant, running by thy horse;
Whose means it was to have prevented this,
But all in vain.

Brother. Oh, noble lady!

Proudly. Mine own best sister! farewell Mr. Ingen.

[*Exeunt Proudly and Maid.*

Brother. Oh! ancient truth, to be denied of no man,
An eel by the tail 's held surer than a woman. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.

Enter SUBTLE with Husband.

Subtle. She is not to be cast.

Husband. It cannot be:

Had you a wife, and I were in your case,
I would be hang'd, even at the chamber door
Where I attempted, but I'd lay her flat.

Subtle. Why, tell me truly, would it please you best,
To have her remain chaste or conquered?

Husband. Oh, friend, 'twould do me good, ev'n at
the heart*

To have her overcome: she does so brag,
And stand upon her chastity, forsooth.

Subtle. Why then in plain terms, sir, the fort is mine,
Your wife has yielded; up tails is her song:
The deed is done. Come now, be merry, man.

Husband. Is the deed done, indeed? come, come,
you jest.

Has my wife yielded? is up tails her song?
Faith come in prose, how got you to the matter first, ha?
Pish! you are so bashful now.

* The 1st Edition has this line:

"Oh friend would do me good av'n at the heart."

And the 2d Edition gives it thus:

"Oh friend, it would do me good at the heart."

Both are wrong, and it is presumed that the true reading is as it
now stands in the text.

bling being past to make the conquest more difficult,
she perceiving my artillery* mounted, falls me flat upon
her back, cries me out aloud,

Alas! I yield. Use me not roughly, friend;
My fort that, like Troy town, ten years hath stood
Besieg'd, and shot at, did remain unwon;
But now 'tis conquer'd. So the deed was done.

Husband. Then came the hottest service. Forward
with your tale, sir.

Subtle. Nay,

Cætera quis nescit? lassī requievimus ambo:

Proveniant medii sic mihi sæpe dies.†

Husband. Which is as much as to say, I am a cuckold
in all languages. But sure 'tis not so: it is impossible my
wife should yield.

Subtle. Heyday! ev'n now, it was impossible she
should hold out, and now it is impossible she should
yield. Stay you but here, and be an ear witness to what
follows: I'll fetch your wife—I know he will not stay.

Husband. Good faith, sir, but he will.

I do suspect some knavery in this.

Here will I hide myself: when thought as gone,

If they do ought unfitting, I will call

Witness, and straightway sue for a divorce. [Exit.

Enter WIFE and SUBTLE.

Subtle. I knew he would not stay.—Now, noble mis-
tress,

I claim your promise.

Wife. What was that, good servant?

Subtle. That you would lie with me.

Wife. If with any man.

But, prithee, first consider with thyself,

If I should yield to thee, what a load thy conscience

Would bear about it; for I wish quick thunder

May strike me, if I yet have lost the truth,

* Artillery.] Readiness, 2d Edit.

† Ovid. Amor. Lib. I. El. 5.

Attempt your purity, but neglect all things
Till that foul wrong I have bred in your knight
I have expell'd, and set your loves aright.

Enter HUSBAND.

Husband. Which now is done already. Madam,
wife, *[kneels.]*
Upon my knees, with weeping eyes, heav'd hands,
I ask thy pardon. Oh, sweet, virtuous, creature!
I prithee break my head.

Wife. Rise, rise, sir, pray.
You have done no wrong to me, at least I think so:
Heaven hath prevented all my injury.
I do forgive, and marry you anew.
Come, we are all invited to the weddings,
The Lady Honor, and the old rich Count,
Young Bold unto another gentlewoman:
We and the Widow are invited thither.
Embrace and love henceforth more really,
Not so like worldlings.

Husband. Here then ends all strife.
Thus false friends are made true, by a true wife. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.*

Enter old COUNT, wrapped in furs; the LADY HONOR, dressed like a bride; the LORD PROUDLY, WELL-TRIED, BOLD, leading FEESIMPLE like a lady masqued; HUSBAND, WIFE, SUBTLE, WIDOW: to them BROTHER, with a letter;† SELDOM with his wife.

Brother. Health and all joy unto this fair assembly.
My brother, who last tide is gone for France,
A branch of willow feathering his hat,
Bade me salute you, lady, and present you

* In the old copies, by an error, Act V. is said again to begin here: it is in fact the second Scene of the last Act.

† The old stage direction states that Subtle enters, "with a letter," but the words have been misplaced, and should have followed "Brother," who delivers it to the Lady Honor.

Widow. Good master Welltried,
would not buy her face; and for her manners,
if they were worse, they shall not displease me.

Welltried. I thank your ladyship.

Feesimple. Look how the old ass, my father, stands :
he looks like the bear in the play; he has killed the
lady with his very sight.* As God help me, I have the
most to do to forbear unmasking me, that I might tell
him his own, as can be.

Bold. Fie! by no means. The widow comes towards
you.

Count. Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Widow. Servant, God give you joy; and gentle-
woman,

Or lady, as full joy, I wish to you :
Nor doubt that I will hinder you your love,
But here am come to do all courtesy
To your fair self, and husband that shall be.

Feesimple. I thank you heartily.

Welltried. S'heart! speak smaller man.

Feesimple. I thank you heartily.

Count. You're going to this gear too Mr. Bold?
um, um, um!

Bold. Not to your couching gear,† my lord. Though
be not so old, or rich as your lordship, yet I love a
young wench as well.

Welltried. As well as my lord? nay, by my faith,
that you do not love a young wench as well as he: I
wonder you will be unmannerly to say so.

Count. Faith, Master Welltried, troth is I love
hem well, but they love not me, um, um. You see,
what ill luck, I have with them, um, um. A pox o' this
cold, still say I.

Welltried. Where got you this cold, my lord? it can

* This refers, no doubt, to the opening of the old "most plea-
sant comedie of *Macedorus*" when Amadine is pursued by the bear.

† Ought we not rather to read "couching gear?"

Abundant thanks unto your widowhood.

Zounds! my father's asleep on's wedding-day:
wonder'd where his cough was all this while.

Enter INGEN, *like a doctor*: a PARSON, BROTHER,
LORD PROUDLY, SELDOM, MRS. SELDOM, HUSBAND, WIFE and SUBTLE.

Ingen. I pray forbear the chamber: noise does hurt her
her sickness I guess rather of the mind,
than of her body, for her pulse beats well;
her vital functions not decay'd a whit,
but have their natural life and operation.
My lord, be cheer'd, I have an ingredient
about me shall make her well I doubt not.
n, Master Parson: it shall be yours, I pray;
The soul's physician should have still the way.

[*Exit Ingen*; *Parson shuts the door*.

Widow. How cheers she, pray?

Wife. In troth, exceeding ill.

Mrs. Seldom. A very weak woman indeed she is,
and surely I think cannot 'scape it.

Husband. Did you mark how she eyed the physician?

Wife. Oh God, I; she is very loth to die.

Mrs. Seldom. I; that's ne'er the better sign, I can tell you.

Subtle. And when the parson came to her, she turn'd away, and still let the physician hold her by the hand.

Bold. But see what thought the bridegroom takes. My conscience knows, now, this is a most preposterous match; yet for the commodity, we wink at all incon-
venience. My lord! my lord!

Count. Um, um, um! I beshrew you for waking of me; now shall I have such a fit of coughing, um, um!—

Bold. Oh hapless wife that shall have thee, that either must let thee sleep continually, or be kept waking herself by the cough.

to break the door; they'll open it themselves.

A curtain drawn, a bed discovered; INGEN with his sword in his hand, and a pistol; the lady in her petticoat: the PARSON.

Proudly. Thy blood, base villain, shall answer this.
[*the brothers set back to back.*]

'll dye thy nuptial bed in thy heart's gore.

Ingen. Come, come, my lord; 'tis not so easily done, 'ou know it is not. For this my attempt
Upon your sister, before God and man
She was my wife, and ne'er a bed-rid gout
shall have my wench to get diseases on.

Proudly. Well may'st thou term her so, that has
consented,
Even with her will, to be dishonoured.

Ingen. Not so, yet have I lain with her.

Maid. But first,
Witness this priest, we both were married.

Priest. True it is, Domine;
Their contract's run into a marriage,
And that, my lord, into a carriage.

Proudly. I will undo thee, priest.

Priest. 'Tis too late.

I'm undone already; wine and tobacco, I defy thee.
Thou, temporal lord, perdy, thou never shalt
Keep me in jail, and hence springs my reason:
My act is neither felony nor treason.

Feesimple. I, sir; but you do not know what kindred
she may have.

Omnes. Come, come, there is no remedy.

Wife. And weigh't right
In my opinion, my honour'd lord,
And every body's else, this is a match,
Fitter ten thousand times, than your intent.

Omnes. Most certain 'tis.

Widow. Besides, this gentleman
Your brother-in-law well parted, and fair mean'd;

good hope of the widow myself; but now I see every body leaves me, saving um, um, um!

Bold. Troth, my lord, and that will stick by you, I warrant.

Widow. But how, sir, shall we salve this gentlewoman?

Bold. Hang her, whore.

Welltried. Fie! you are too uncivil.

Feesimple. Whore in thy face, I do defy thy taunts.

Bold. Nay, hold, fair lady: now I think upon't, The old Count has no wife; lets make a match.

Omnes. If he be so contented.

Count. With all my heart.

Bold. Then kiss your spouse.

Count. S'foot! She has a beard. How now! my son?

Omnes. 'Tis the Lord Feesimple!

[*Feesimple unmasks.*

Feesimple. Father, lend me your sword. You and I are made a couple of fine fools, are we not? If I were not valiant now, and meant to beat 'em all, here would lie a simple disgrace upon us, a Feesimple one, indeed. Mark now, what I'll say to 'em. D'ye hear me, my masters? Dam-me, ye are all the son of a whore, and ye lie, and I will make it good with my sword. 'This is call'd roaring, father.

Subtle. I'll not meddle with you, sir.

Proudly. You are my blood.

Welltried. And I flesh'd you, you know.

Bold. And I have a charge coming, I must not fight now.

Feesimple. Has either of you any thing to say to me?

Husband. Not we, sir.

Feesimple. Then have I something to say to you.

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Brother. Yes, marry have I, sir.

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